NAPOLEON AND HIS ADOPTED SON

V. M. MONTAGU

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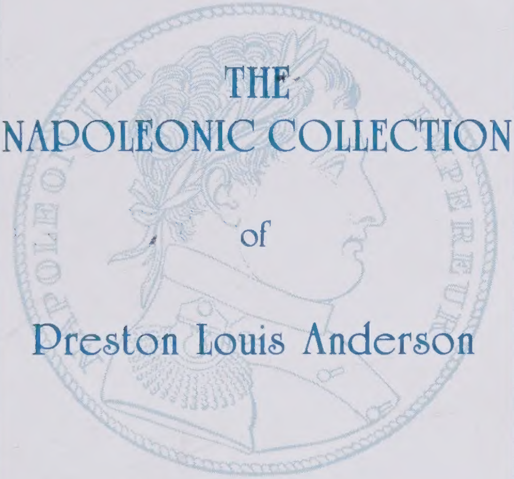

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Eugène de Beauharnais

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Eugène de Beauharnais.

Napoleon
And His Adopted Son

Eugène de Beauharnais and His Relations with the Emperor

By

V. M. Montagu

Author of "Sophie Dawes, Queen of Chantilly"
"The Abbé Edgeworth and His Friends," etc.

With Photogravure and Sixteen other Portraits and Illustrations

New York
McBride, Nast & Company
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TO

GABRIELLE ANGÉLIQUE NEVEU

SHE stood where two ways met, when youth all hidden things would know,
Upon my brow the dawn of Life, on hers the sunset glow.—
" Tell me, wise friend, which path to choose, for oh ! I long to learn
The whence and whereunto of Life, how Fate her wheel doth turn ;
The riddle of Eternity no mortal mind can guess,
The why and wherefore of stern Death, the goal tow'rds which we press."—
" The paths may part awhile," she said ; " one rough, one smooth appear,
Yet rough and smooth some day will merge into one perfect sphere.
Our fate is but the common fate, the End lies far away ;
With tear-dimmed eyes we search for Light and groping lose our way ;
Our greedy hands outstretched to grasp oft miss what we should prize ;
Our fluttering wings we fain would spread, yet fail from earth to rise ;
But take this book where men have read the riddle of the Sage. . . ."
With eager eyes and trembling hand I conned each well-worn page,
And read while Titan drove his steeds across the azure dome.
The twilight found me reading still within that ponderous tome. . . .
A mist before my eyes did pass, cool dew—or was it rain ?—
The story of humanity was fraught with grief and pain !
Tho' fast I read, still fainter grew the words of Eastern Seers,
And lo ! the last page of that book was blotted out with tears !

Preface

GRATITUDE and ingratitude have inspired the world's greatest authors with some of their most beautiful thoughts. Dante, who imprisons in his literary pillory all the faults which mankind is prone to commit, reserves his worst punishments for those who have been guilty of that most unnatural crime ingratitude; a sin peculiar to us, the superior creation, for ingratitude is seldom met with among animals. In the second sphere of the thirty-second and lowest circle of Hell, that place which Dante calls *Antenora*, " a place so horrible that words fail to describe it," where the souls of those who have been ungrateful to their country and betrayed it stand immersed in a frozen lake, their bodies black and blue with cold, tears of anguish gushing from their eyes and their teeth chattering so loudly that the poet and his guide are reminded of the croaking of frogs in the marshes at night or the noise made by storks opening and shutting their beaks in springtime, stands Buoso da Duera, a native of Cremona, who, for a bribe offered by Guy de Montfort, left the pass leading to his native town unprotected and thus enabled the army of Charles d'Anjou to take possession of Cremona and destroy it; and in this fearful place Buoso da Duera is condemned to suffer eternal torments for having accepted French gold.

We gladly turn from this scene of horror to contemplate the reward reserved for those who have shown themselves grateful towards their benefactors. In Paradise Dante places a certain Romeo, whose identity is somewhat obscure, some saying that he was a baron of Vence, a town near Nice, others declaring that he was a Spanish prince, while not a few assert that the name of Romeo in this case means a *pellegrino a Roma*, or pilgrim to Rome. Be this as it may, this Romeo was a steward in the house of Raimondo Berlinghieri, to whom Romeo, in return for kind treatment, gave wise counsel and, as the poet puts it in his quaint phraseology, "rendered his master twelve for every ten he had received from his hand." For Raimondo's four daughters Romeo found four royal husbands in the persons of Louis IX of France, Charles d'Anjou, Henry III of England and the latter's brother Richard. But jealous courtiers crept in between master and servitor and poisoned Raimondo's mind so that he had no peace until he had driven the faithful Romeo from his house. And thus Romeo, although old and worn with years of honourable service, was forced to beg his daily bread.

> "And if the world but knew what treasures in his heart he bore,
> Though he his daily bread with tears did beg from door to door,
> Much would it praise that faithful man and praise still more." [1]

During Napoleon's eventful career he met with every form and variety of human character. It would seem as if he, the greatest man in modern history, had been fated to sound the depths of human meanness. How often did he not bestow his affection upon, and place his confidence in some unworthy person, one of those generals, perhaps, of whom he was so proud, or, worse still, a member of his own family! And when Death at last came to quench his unconquerable spirit, he had learnt the height and depth of ingratitude.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to show that he did not always throw his benefits away upon unworthy objects and that, notwithstanding Marmont and Fouché's assertions, Eugène de Beauharnais deserved the affection which his adoptive father always displayed for him and continued to do so until the last day of his life.

The viceroy of Italy was not perfect; he, too, had his moments of moral weakness, and I should be deceiving my readers were I to hide his faults. An Eastern saying, "He who would find a perfect friend must walk the world alone," also applies to the author who would hope to find a faultless character in history about which to write. But at least

---

[1] "E se il mondo sapesse il cuor ch' egli ebbe,
Mendicando sua vita a frusto a frusto,
Assai lo lode, e più lo loderebbe."

Eugène did not plan the overthrow of his benefactor, as Murat did; nor did he help to bring it about, as Marmont indubitably helped; nor did he rejoice thereat, as Marie-Louise rejoiced in deeds if not in words.

I have consulted all the works I could find concerning Eugène de Beauharnais; and from this mass of evidence for and against the viceroy of Italy, I have endeavoured to sift the truth. Strange to say, a good biography of the adopted son of Napoleon does not exist in the French language. The ten volumes of his memoirs and correspondence edited by Baron du Casse are rather stiff reading for the general public, although admirers of Napoleon will revel in this veritable treasure-house of letters to and from the imperial mentor.

Perhaps the chief interest in Eugène de Beauharnais' life lies in the fact that, as the step-son of General Bonaparte and the adopted son of the Emperor Napoleon, he witnessed and assisted at most of the important episodes in that wonderful man's career. Eugène only lived forty-three years, but those years were full of events. Born in the feverishly brilliant years before the first fall of the Bourbon dynasty, he saw the great Revolution spread over France; he watched the rising of Napoleon's star, the blossoming of the Consulship for life, the fruition of the Empire, the Hundred Days' marvel, and the eclipse of a great man's star; his own life closed in retirement a few years before the Revolution of July overthrew the Bourbon dynasty for the third time. These facts alone should make his life worth recounting. But there are other interesting points in his story.

Napoleon and Eugène all unconsciously influenced each other's lives in no small degree.

Those who, like Napoleon, are fatalists can find much to ponder over in the story of Eugène's first meeting with the man whose fate was to influence his own.

And Eugène's influence over his adoptive father, until that adoptive father's divorce, was considerable and, as we shall see, was the means of postponing his mother's divorce on more than one occasion. Supposing Eugène had not gone to Italy but had continued to live near his adoptive father, perhaps that divorce would never have come about.

Napoleon's divorce was the outcome of a crisis ; historians have shown us whose fault it was that such a question ever came on the *tapis*. But when once that idea had taken root in Napoleon's brain, no feelings of remorse or regret could prevent its accomplishment.

True affection—the affection that does not need to express itself in words—is not a worthless object to be cast aside for the empty protestations of devotion uttered by obsequious friends. Napoleon would perhaps have been a happier man and been spared much mental suffering if he had been content with the successes won by his Grand Army in 1809 and if he had made Eugène his successor on the throne of France.

In conclusion let us remark that to Eugène de Beauharnais belongs the honour of having kept at his post until the very last, until his adoptive father's abdication at Fontainebleau took the burden from his shoulders and with it the reward which should have been his. His reward, however, is to be found in the concluding sentence of this biography of a good man.

VIOLETTE M. MONTAGU.

PARIS, *January*, 1913.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to MM. Maurice Orange, Réalier-Dumas and F. Schommer for allowing me to reproduce their pictures, and to Messrs. Walter Pulitzer, and Dodd, Mead and Co., of New York, for the permission to include in my book the three portraits which figure in the late Mr. Albert Pulitzer's invaluable work *Le Roman du Prince Eugène.*

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Eugène de Beauharnais

CHAPTER I

Birth and childhood of Eugène de Beauharnais—Family dissensions—Mme. de Beauharnais prepares for the coming storm—M. de Beauharnais is thrown into prison—His wife shares his fate—Execution of the *beau danseur*—Mme. de Beauharnais is released from prison—The pinch of poverty—Eugène is sent to school at Saint-Germain-en-Laye—General Hoche befriends him.

THE last decade of the eighteenth century was dawning heralded by blood-red clouds and moaning wind, sure signs of trouble in the near future. The reigns of the *Roi Soleil* and of *Louis le Bien-Aimé,* that period of French history which may be likened to the oppressive heat of a midsummer day when a thunderstorm is brewing, one and a half centuries of ever-increasing extravagance, wastefulness and dissolute morals, had brought the fair land of France to the brink of a precipice from which neither the effete efforts of an amateur locksmith nor the pastoral follies of the *Autrichienne* could save her, but from which she was to emerge to enjoy such prosperity as she has never known before or since. The descendants of the toilers who had borne the heat and burden of the day and had been denied their hire had grown weary of obeying; they, too, wished to take their turn at playing the master.

The Bastille had fallen—or surrendered—and, in its fall, had released a mere handful of prisoners, one of whom had long ago forgotten his name and the crime, real or imaginary, for which he had been imprisoned. The attention of those who hoped for better things was fixed upon the *Etats généraux* and especially upon the *Tiers Etat,* which, far more numerous than the representatives of the clergy and of the nobility, had loudly declared its intention of giving France her much-needed constitution. On winning its first victory, the *Tiers Etat* changed the name of the *Etats généraux* to that of the *Assemblée nationale constituante ;* in future the *Tiers Etat* was to be all-powerful. Those who attended the *séances* of this ambitious assembly might frequently have noticed a little boy of about nine years of age seated close to the great stove placed in the middle of the *salle,* holding in his right hand the left hand of one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the new ideas, while with the other he clasped the right hand of a member of that old French nobility which had sworn to die rather than yield the least of its privileges. Politics had estranged these two deputies, brothers by ties of blood, but enemies by profession ; they seldom addressed one another. The deputy to the left of the juvenile politician was François de Beauharnais, the child's uncle ; while the deputy seated on his right was his father, the vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais, representing the department of Blois and one of that little body of nobles who, like Jacques d'Aumont and Louis de Noailles, were already beginning to consider the advisability of getting rid of their titles—if not their fortunes—as savouring too much of the days when the king could do no wrong.

Alexandre de Beauharnais, known as *Beauharnais le beau danseur* on account of his talent for dancing, and father of the little boy who was to become the adopted son of the greatest man of modern times, was born in Martinique in 1760. He entered the army while still almost a child, as was the fashion in those days ; when captain in the regiment of *Royal Champagne,* he married his cousin Joséphine Tascher de La Pagerie, three years his junior and also a native of Martinique. Mlle. Joséphine must have been a terribly forward young person for her years, if we believe certain information contained in a volume published in Paris in 1820 under the title of *Mémoires et Correspondance de l'Impératrice Joséphine* and purporting to be written by the hand of the Empress herself ; supposing the assertions contained in one of these letters were true, they would account for many rumours which were circulated and believed during her career as a girl, a wife, a widow, an Empress and a *divorcée.* Alexandre de Beauharnais was only seventeen years of age when he contracted this union, which seems to have been very distasteful to the families of both parties. The marriage once celebrated, the young couple settled in France, where they resided for some time with Alexandre's father, then a very old man living in retirement at the family seat, the château of La Ferté Beauharnais, in the department of Loir-et-Cher. Unfortunately, the vicomte and the vicomtesse began to disagree very soon after their marriage. The young husband frequently chided his wife for her vanity and extravagance, two faults which only increased with years; whereupon Mme. de Beauharnais would retort that he was jealous of the admiration which her beauty aroused, and then she would add in an injured tone that he was always finding fault with her. And he had another grievance against her: her manners were too provincial—or too colonial.

After a few months of married life Alexandre, notwithstanding the fact that his wife was soon to make him a father, took himself off to Paris, where he passed his time dabbling with politics and amusing himself. It is probable that both were equally to blame for this sad state of affairs, which, as time went on, was to become still more painful.

Mme. de Beauharnais decided to come up to Paris for the birth of this her first child, which event took place September 3rd, 1780, or '81, at a house in the rue Thévenot. On the morrow the baby, a boy, was baptized in the presence of his father, who had consented to stay with his wife during her illness, and numerous relations, at the church of Saint Sauveur in the rue Saint Denis, and received the names of Eugène Rose. Considerable doubt exists as to the exact year of Eugène's birth; two or three of his biographers, and indeed he himself, gave the date as 1781, and yet it would seem an erroneous date from the following entry discovered a few years ago in the register of the church in which the baptism took place. "This day, Tuesday the 4th (September, 1780) was baptized Eugène Rose, born yesterday, son of the very high-born and very puissant seigneur, messire Alexandre François Marie, vicomte de Beauharnois (*sic*), captain of the regiment of La Ferre, knight, and of the high-born and puissant dame Madame Marie Joséphine Rose de Tascher de La Pagerie, his wife, rue Thévenot; godfather: high-born and puissant Seigneur M$^{ire.}$ François, marquis de Beauharnois, baron de Banville, knight of the Royal Order and knight of the Order of Saint Louis, vice-admiral in the Royal Navy, lieutenant-general and former governor of the island of Martinique and of the adjacent isles, paternal grandfather; godmother, high-born and puissant dame Rose Claire Desvergers de Sanois, wife of high-born and puissant seigneur messire Joseph Gaspard Tascher de La Pagerie, knight of the Order of Saint Louis, captain of dragoons, maternal grandfather, present; represented by high-born and puissant dame Marie Euphémie Désirée Tascher de La Pagerie, dame Renaudin, maternal aunt.

"Signatures: TASCHER DE LAPAGERIE, (*sic*)
LE MARQUIS DE BEAUHARNOIS,
LE VICOMTE DE BEAUHARNOIS,
TASCHER DE LAPAGERIE,
BÉGON,
JACQUIN, *curé*."

Unfortunately the birth of the little Eugène did not produce a permanent reconciliation between the young parents; for Alexandre, having conducted his wife after her recovery back to his father's house, returned to his semi-bachelor life in Paris. His wife's aunt, Mme. Renaudin, hoping that a prolonged absence abroad would make the erring husband regret the young wife and little child in the old family château, persuaded Alexandre to travel in Italy for a while. However, as he took care to provide himself with an amusing travelling-companion of the opposite sex, it is probable that he seldom gave a thought to his wife and little Eugène. During this journey, which lasted many months, Alexandre learnt that his wife had borne him a little daughter, Hortense by name, a piece of news which caused him to fly into a towering passion. The vicomte swore that he was not the father of the little Hortense, and declared that his wife must go into a convent. This Mme. de Beauharnais, to whom admiration and flattery were more necessary than her daily bread, was very unwilling to do; she retorted that Alexandre was the father of her child and that he knew the fact as well as herself. Josephine, since the birth of her little daughter, had been staying at

Noisy, near Paris, whither her husband now wrote announcing his return to France and recommending her either to pay a visit to her mother in Martinique, or else to go into a convent, and ending with the following instructions :

> " . . . As I hope to accomplish in five or six days the seventy leagues which still lie between me and the capital, and as, when once I am there, I shall require the use of my carriage in order to amuse myself and to prevent my legs getting too tired, you will oblige me by sending my horses and my carriage to Paris for next Sunday, the 26th inst. If Euphémie likes to take advantage of this opportunity in order to bring Eugène to see me, it will give me great pleasure to have him with me, a pleasure which I have not enjoyed for many a long day. . . ."

Josephine now moved up to Paris, where, partly in obedience to her husband's injunctions and partly in order to suit her own plans, she took up her abode at the celebrated convent of Panthemont, in the rue de Grenelle—not to spend her time in devotions and in doing penance for her sins, however, for Panthemont was the refuge of many grass-widows and wives under a cloud who each had their own apartment, went out into society and received their male and female friends just as if they were living in the world outside the convent walls.

Matters became still more strained between the pair when Alexandre, as he had threatened to do, took legal proceedings against his wife, demanding a separation and requiring her to give him the custody of his eldest child, Eugène, who was now four years of age. But Alexandre lost his case, much to his disgust, and it was decided that Mme. de Beauharnais was to live wherever she liked and to dispose of her own property. Alexandre was to obtain possession of Eugène Rose after his fifth birthday, until which time he was to reside with his mother wherever she might choose to live. The vicomte was to pay all expenses incurred for the support and education of his son, whose summer holidays were to be spent with his mother in the country.

Mme. de Beauharnais remained for a few more months at Panthemont and then went to stay with her husband's father at Croissy-sur-Seine, where the de Beauharnais family had a property. Mme. de Beauharnais seems to have managed to win her father-in-law over to her side, for we hear of frequent visits made by the young mother to her husband's father ; in fact the old gentleman was much inclined to take her part against his son.

A certain Mme. Hostein, who had two charming little children about the same age as Eugène and Hortense (or Eugénie, as she was called for the first few years of her life), resided on a property adjoining that of the de Beauharnais, and Mme. de Beauharnais made great friends with Mme. Hostein. At the latter's suggestion, the four children shared their games and learnt their lessons together, and thus was laid the foundation of a long friendship which lasted until Josephine became " more than queen."

Although the vicomte and his wife corresponded frequently concerning Eugène's health and well-being during the next few months, Alexandre, beyond having Eugénie inoculated against smallpox at the tender age of two years, does not seem to have displayed much interest in his little daughter.

In January, 1787, Alexandre announced his intention of taking Eugène away from his mother and of placing him at a school kept by a M. Verdière in the rue de Seine, Paris. The news that the two children were to be separated was received by Eugénie with a wild burst of indignation and grief. They were both high-spirited, affectionate little things, and this separation was a very real sorrow to them. Who does not remember what a blank we experienced in our lives when we left home to go to school for the first time ?

Alexandre witnessed a very sad little scene when he went down to Croissy to fetch his son. When Eugénie understood that the edict was irrevocable, that her small will was powerless to arrest this seemingly unjust and wicked measure, when she realized that her play-fellow was going to be taken from her, and when she saw his little trunk being packed with the well-known clothes and the toys they had played with together and perhaps quarrelled over at times, her grief knew no bounds. A vague idea that he was being sent away from home as a punishment for some childish fault crossed her mind. Alexandre, touched by the little girl's despair, tried to take her in his arms and to comfort her.

(Photo: A. R. Montagu)

HORTENSE DE BEAUHARNAIS

From an old print

To face page 26

"Papa!" cried she through her tears, "forgive poor Eugène! I'm sure he'll never do it again if I tell him that he makes me unhappy."

Her father assured her that he was not angry with Eugène for any fault of his.

"Then you won't send him away, will you? You'll let him stay here, won't you?"

"No, my dear, that cannot be. Your brother will soon grow into a man, and he must learn how to live and behave as a man should behave."

"So he's going away—really going away?"

"Yes."

Eugénie waited to hear no more. With a wail of despair, she tore herself away from the vicomte, rushed out into the garden and flung herself on the ground in some secluded corner, there to sob and cry over her first experience of the injustice of man.

Eugène in his memoirs makes no mention of his experiences while under the care of M. Verdière, so he was probably as happy at school as it is possible for a little boy, of such an affectionate disposition as he was, to be away from home.

In the month of June, 1788, just as Eugène was about to start for Fontainebleau, where he was to spend his summer holidays, Mme. de Beauharnais declared her intention of going to visit her mother in Martinique—and thither she went, taking Eugénie, as she was still called, with her. She remained nearly two years in her native land until trouble broke out among the natives, who set fire one night to her mother's house, and Mme. de Beauharnais was forced to fly, still clad in her night attire, holding the little Hortense in her arms. The future Empress of the French and the queen of Holland were lucky enough to find shelter on board a boat which was about to start for France, where they arrived destitute except for the light clothes with which their fellow-passengers, in their compassion for their piteous plight, had provided them. Mme. de Beauharnais does not seem to have displayed much concern for the fate of her mother, who, however, managed to escape from the fury of her slaves and lived to see her daughter become Empress.

Eugène, in the meantime, had been removed from M.

Verdière's establishment and sent to the Collège d'Harcourt, where he remained until July, 1790, which brings us to the opening scene of our story.

Mme. de Beauharnais arrived in France towards the end of this year and put up at the Hôtel des Asturies, in the rue d'Anjou, Paris. Although the breach between the vicomte and the vicomtesse de Beauharnais had widened considerably during the latter's absence in Martinique, the old marquis was determined to make one more effort to reconcile the couple. Mme. de Beauharnais' chief grievance was that she was not allowed to see her son, who, she heard, had grown much during her absence and had made great progress in his studies. In order to bring about this reconciliation, the marquis de Beauharnais, together with the comte and comtesse de Montmorin, concocted the following plan: the comte de Montmorin was to give a dinner-party to which he was to invite Mme. de Beauharnais and her daughter and Alexandre and his son, without, however, letting either party know whom they were to meet.

Mme. de Beauharnais and her little girl were already seated in Mme. de Montmorin's *salon* when Alexandre appeared leading Eugène by the hand. On seeing his wife and daughter, Alexandre's face darkened; angry words, bitter reproaches, burst from his lips. He was just going to rush out of the room when Eugénie, who was wearing a little costume such as was worn in those days by the natives in Martinique, recognized her father, notwithstanding her long absence abroad, and ran towards him with outstretched arms crying:

"Papa! papa!"

The vicomte, unable to withstand this invitation, took the little girl in his arms and kissed her over and over again. Eugène meanwhile had hidden his face on his mother's shoulder; she, with tears in her eyes, was trying to recognize in this strong, sturdy little boy, the child—almost baby—whom she had not seen for so many long months.

Mme. de Montmorin, thinking that a little good advice would not come amiss at such a moment, said:

"*Monsieur le vicomte*, such a man as you are cannot possibly allow prejudices and old grievances to stand in the way of common sense and propriety."

The old marquis de Beauharnais, who had been watching the scene from his arm-chair, also put in a word :

" My son, take my advice—be reconciled to your wife ! Josephine is my daughter ; and as she has never ceased to be worthy of that name, I shall continue to call her daughter."

Alexandre had already begun to waver in his resolution not to address another word to his wife. Like all Frenchmen, he was devoted to his children, and the little Eugénie's tearful rapture at seeing her beloved Eugène once more—Eugène whom she had mourned so bitterly and whom she had never expected to see again—broke down the last barriers of resentment. He turned towards his wife, who, with a cry of joy not unmingled perhaps with contrition, flung herself into his arms.

The next few months were spent by Mme. de Beauharnais and her children in a house at Fontainebleau. We can imagine the delight of Eugène and Eugénie at being together once more. Alexandre still continued to spend much of his time in Paris, where, as a member of the *Assemblée constituante,* he was well known as a supporter of the new ideas.

The flight of Louis XVI and his family to Varennes in 1791 was loudly blamed by the vicomte ; the latter soon became so influential that he was looked upon by his wife's friends and neighbours at Fontainebleau almost as a king ; indeed the inhabitants of that sleepy town used to point at Eugène when he walked along the streets and say :

" There goes the Dauphin ! "

During one of the vicomte's long sojourns in the capital, he took his son to see the preparations for that wonderful fête which was celebrated on the Champ de Mars, July 17th, 1791. In the following month Alexandre took a still more active part in the affairs of his country, for he joined the *armée du Rhin* with the title of lieutenant-general.

Mme. de Beauharnais now moved up to Paris, where she resumed the life of frivolity for which she was so eminently suited. She, during her course through life, always seems to have taken good care to gather as many influential friends around her as possible—witness her extraordinary and very unseemly friendship with the Emperor Alexander of Russia when the Russian bear invaded the nest of the eagle. Among the friends whom she made about this time were Mathieu de Montmorency,[1] the prince de Salm-Kyrburg[2] and the latter's sister, the princess Amalia of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, who was to prove such a friend-in-need to Mme. de Beauharnais and her children a few months later.

In January, 1792, Mme. de Beauharnais returned to Fontainebleau, where she and her children were the guests of her aunt, Mme. Renaudin. Here she remained until the following September, when she moved up to the de Beauharnais *hôtel* in the rue Saint Dominique, Paris. As Eugène had been suffering from weak eyes for some time past he was unable to attend to his studies as diligently as he might have done.

The month of May in the following year (1793) saw Alexander de Beauharnais, in consequence of Custine's[3] departure, at the head of the *armée du Rhin*.

The events of the previous summer had made Mme. de Beauharnais extremely nervous, and the stormy winter of 1792–3 had only aggravated this condition. Notwithstanding the fact that her husband's very advanced opinions, or rather his position as head of the *armée du Rhin*, ought to have shielded her from any fear of molestation, Mme. de Beauharnais took alarm and determined to leave the capital—at least for a time. As she knew that her friend the princess of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was also about to leave Paris in order to go and reside on an estate belonging to her brother, the prince de Salm, at Saint Martin, in Valois, Mme. de Beauharnais begged that lady to take Eugène and Eugénie with her and to keep them until an escort could be found to take them over to England, which country was already being invaded by hordes of *émigrés* and *émigrettes*, including the flower of the French nobility and not a few would-be nobles. The princess promised to take care of the children as if they were her own, and to keep them with her until matters had settled down. Poor blind women !—they little thought *how* matters would settle down. We are not surprised to read that one of Mme. de Beauharnais' biographers accuses her of abandoning her children ; this was a most extraordinary step on her part ; surely her children would have been as safe, if not safer, with her than elsewhere ? No sooner did Alexandre get wind of this plan than he, in great wrath, despatched a messenger post-haste to Paris, ordering her to give up Eugène instantly. As the children had already gone to Saint Martin when Mme. de Beauharnais received this letter, she, much against her will, was obliged to write to the princess begging her to send Eugène and Eugénie back to Paris. The children were brought up to the capital by the prince de Salm in person, which act of kindness eventually led to his being arrested, imprisoned, condemned and the rest.

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[1] *Montmorency*, Mathieu Jean Félicité: vicomte, then duc de (1767–1826): first served in America, then returned to France, where he became a deputy at the *Etats généraux;* on August 4th, 1789, he made a celebrated speech in which he proposed that all titles of nobility should be abolished. He left France when the Republic was proclaimed and went to Switzerland, where he remained until after the 9th *Thermidor*. The Restoration saw a complete revolution in his political opinions, for he became aide-de-camp to the comte d'Artois, *pair de France*, Foreign Minister (1822), represented France at the Congress of Verona, and finished by becoming tutor to the duc de Bordeaux.

[2] *Salm-Kyrburg*, Frederick, prince of (1746–1794): was born at Limburg, came to Paris, where he built himself a magnificent *hôtel*, now the palace of the *Légion d'honneur;* he took part in the revolt in Holland in 1787, where he pretended to be an agent sent by France. On allowing Utrecht to be taken by the king of Prussia he returned to Paris, where he espoused the cause of the Revolution, which, however, did not prevent his perishing upon the scaffold.

[3] *Custine*, Philippe, comte de (1740–1793): a French general, commanded a regiment of the *armée du Rhin*, was accused of having allowed Mayence to fall into the hands of the Prussians, and executed.

The *ci-devant* vicomte, delighted to have his son with him, now placed the boy at the Collège national in Strasburg. Alexandre frequently invited the boy to spend a day or two at his head-quarters at Weissenburg, upon which occasions Eugène probably acquired that taste for military subjects for which he was distinguished in after years.

It was doubtless during the few months spent by Eugène at this college that he indulged in those boyish pranks for which some of his biographers are inclined to blame him ; these pranks, quite harmless in themselves and natural to a high-spirited boy, consisted of crowing, barking, bleating and braying. His tutors complained that he lacked application and industry ; his copy-books were untidy and his exercises full of mistakes. As for Latin and Greek, neither fines, nor birch-rod, nor that most odious of all punishments — being kept in after school-hours, could drive even the rudiments of these two languages into his curly head. When shut up by himself to finish his tasks, he, instead of setting to work, would yawn, sing or go through his repertoire of farmyard lays.

Mme. de Beauharnais did not share her husband's political opinions ; was she not a royalist at heart ? and was she not secretly proud and delighted when, not so many years afterwards, her second husband, forsaking his proper sphere—the battlefield, begged her to help him make his Court as faithful an imitation of that of his predecessors on the throne of France as extravagance and high-sounding titles could make it ?

The month of September, 1793, was spent by Mme. de Beauharnais at Croissy, where, on the 28th of that same month, Eugène arrived unexpectedly from Strasburg ; his college had been closed and he and his fellow-students had been sent to their respective homes. Alexandre had not foreseen this contingency when, on being called away from Weissenburg by his military duties, he had said *au revoir* to his son. Eugène, soon after his arrival at Croissy, in accordance with the popular ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, was apprenticed to a joiner, one *père* Cochard by name, who promised to give him thorough instruction in the trade of carpentry and to inculcate patriotic feelings in his youthful breast ; this he did with such success that, on October 19th, the thirteen-year-old patriot was declared to be a good citizen and staunch defender of the fatherland and was presented with a musket and sword.

Mme. de Beauharnais' fears for her own safety did not prevent her returning to Paris in January, 1794 ; she probably found Croissy unbearably dull in winter, and preferred to run the risk of being arrested rather than suffer a hundred deaths from *ennui*, as ladies afflicted with the vapours described boredom in those days. It was in this same month that she wrote an extraordinary letter to Vadier,[1] the influential *montagnard*, in which she begs for his protection, assures him of her devotion to the cause of the Republic, affirms that her principles are those of a good *républicaine* and concludes by informing him that her children, " before the Revolution, were brought up exactly as if they were the offspring of *sans-culottes ;* she hopes that they will bring honour to the Republic."

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[1] *Vadier*, Marc-Guillaume (1736–1828) : a deputy at the *Etats généraux* and a member of the Convention, joined the *montagnards*, voted the arrest of the *Girondins*, and denounced Catherine Théot. He was sentenced to be deported after the 9th *Thermidor*, but he managed to evade his pursuers. Compromised in the Babeuf conspiracy, he was acquitted by the tribunal of Vendôme. He was exiled to Brussels in 1816, where he died in 1828.

This was all very much to the point, but Vadier was receiving too many letters in the same style about this time. Good republicans of a certain kind were getting rather too common to be genuine.

In consequence of a decree ordering all *ci-devant* nobles to leave the army of the Republic, Alexandre de Beauharnais, notwithstanding his patriotic principles, was obliged early in 1794 to deliver up his sword, after which he returned to La Ferté Beauharnais, where he continued to reside (but not with his family), for three or four weeks. He would probably have continued to reside there unmolested had not his admiring neighbours, in a laudable but mistaken desire to reward merit, elected him mayor of the commune. This brought him back into public notice. Before another month had elapsed he had been denounced by some over-zealous patriot as a *ci-devant*, and therefore a traitor to the Republican camp, accused of dilatoriness when exercising his duties as general outside Mayence, brought up to Paris, and imprisoned in the Luxemburg palace, now a prison.

Alexandre's arrest and imprisonment had opened Mme. de Beauharnais' eyes to the fact that her own arrest was only a question of time. His sad fate had probably awakened better feelings in her breast ; perhaps memories of the first happy days of courtship came back to taunt her. In the following letter written to her husband's aunt, Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais, a would-be Sappho, of whom it was said that she spent too much time over her complexion and too little over her rhymes, we find signs of contrition and remorse.

" . . . Yesterday brought me both much happiness and much grief. My husband had expressed a wish to see his children ; thanks to our guardian angel, he was able to obtain that wish. I had determined, in order to spare the children any grief, to be present during their visit. They had been told some days ago that, as their father was ill, he had put himself into the hands of a physician who had ordered him, on account of the good air and quiet, to take up his abode at the Luxemburg. The first interview passed off very well, except that Eugénie made a remark to the effect that her papa's rooms were very small and that there seemed a great many other sick people in the place. When I arrived at the Luxemburg, I found that they had left their father's room; an honest turnkey, who had been bribed by Névil,[1] had taken the precaution to get them out of the way, and they had gone to pay a visit to some neighbours who had been much touched by their youth, sad plight and innocent faces. As I dreaded lest our mutual grief should reveal the truth to them, my interview with their father took place during their absence. Alexandre bears his captivity very bravely; however, he quite broke down when he saw my tears. Then I, fearful lest his grief should overcome him, managed to calm myself and began to comfort him in my turn. The reappearance of our little ones caused another flood of tears which was all the more painful to me because I had to conceal the cause of those tears. Eugène, who is truth personified, was deceived for a while; then he, with his usual affectionate care for me, tried to persuade me that I was wrong to grieve so and that his papa's illness was not dangerous. Eugénie's face bore that pensive little air which, as you know, is so becoming to her. 'Do you think that papa is ill?' she asked her brother; 'I can tell you that he is not ill of any illness which a doctor can cure.'—'What do you mean, my daughter?' said I. 'Do you think that we are deceiving you?'—'Forgive me, mama, but I think so.' Eugène burst in quickly with: 'What funny things you say!' Whereupon she retorted: 'No! it's all very simple and very natural.'—'What do you mean, *mademoiselle?*' said I, in my turn pretending to seem very severe. 'No doubt,' continued the artful little thing, 'no doubt parents are allowed to deceive their children in order to spare them pain.' Having said this, she flung herself into my arms and put one hand on her father's shoulder. We mingled our smiles and tears during this little scene which Eugène made even more touching by his caresses. Dear amiable child! he is so sensitive and his sister is so intelligent. Hitherto these children have afforded us nothing but satisfaction and happiness ; why, in this hour of trial, do we suffer such cruel anxiety for their fate, and why am I so overwhelmed by this terrible sorrow, a sorrow about which I can scarcely bear to write ?

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[1] A friend of the de Beauharnais family.

" During their visit to the Luxemburg my children (and especially my daughter) had guessed, from what they had seen and heard, that their father was a prisoner. We were obliged to confess what we could no longer conceal. Eugénie asked why her father was in prison. Her brother, less shy than usual, also wanted to know the cause of his cruel captivity. It would have been difficult to explain. ' Oh ! ' cried Eugénie, ' when we are older we will punish those wicked people who denounced you ! '—' Hush, my daughter,' said her father to her ; ' if anybody should hear what you say, I should be ruined as you and your mother would also be.' Eugène then said : ' Have you not often told us that we are allowed to resist the oppressor ? '—' Yes, and I repeat it now,' replied my husband, ' but prudence must walk hand in hand with power ; and he who would vanquish Injustice must steal upon her unawares. . . .' "

The wife and children of the imprisoned *ci-devant* were now exposed to the annoyance of those domiciliary visits which frequently heralded further arrests among the inhabitants of the house visited. In another letter to her husband's aunt, Mme. de Beauharnais gives her a graphic account of what usually passed during these unwelcome visitations.

" Would you believe it, dear aunt ? my children have just undergone a long and minute examination. That wicked old man,[1] the member of the *comité* whose name I have already mentioned to you, has been to see me and, under pretext of feeling anxiety concerning my husband's fate, made my children tell him all they know. I must confess that I, too, was at first deceived ; his affability was rather remarkable ; however, on his becoming very angry and spiteful, I immediately guessed what he was about. When he saw that I understood the reason of his visit, he threw off the mask and confessed to me that he had been commissioned to find out all he could from my children, an easy matter with such guileless, artless young creatures.

[1] Vadier.

He then began to ask them all kinds of questions. I felt myself first turn pale with terror, then crimson with indignation; I trembled with anger. I was about to tell the old revolutionist how I loathed and despised him, when he advised me to leave him alone with the children. Having locked Eugénie into a closet all by herself, he began to question her brother. . . . He asked the children all sorts of questions, as to what we talked about, whom we saw, what letters we received, and what they had seen us do; he then came to the most important point: he wanted to know what Alexandre had talked about. My children answered very cleverly and, notwithstanding the artfulness of the old man, who was dying to discover something worth knowing, my son's ingenuousness and his sister's clever replies frustrated his designs."

To Mme. de Beauharnais' honour be it said that she did her very best to get her husband released from prison; so loudly did she express her indignation at the captivity of this innocent victim of jealousy and spite that she soon found herself denounced; imprisonment followed a month later. She was first taken to the prison of Sainte Pélagie, where, however, she remained but a very short time, and then she was removed to the convent of Les Carmes, from whence she wrote the following letter to Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais:

"Last night I found an anonymous letter warning me of the danger to which I was exposed. I might have fled; but whither could I go without compromising my husband? Having decided to wait and see what happened, I gathered my children in my arms and sought to forget my troubles in their sweet society; but their very presence only served to remind me of their father's absence. Sleep tore them from my arms. I was still immersed in sad reflections when I heard a mighty uproar outside the gates of my hôtel. I knew that my hour had come; the knowledge that I was powerless to escape gave me courage to resign myself to my fate. As the noise was getting nearer and nearer, I passed into my children's room; they were asleep! The contrast between their peaceful slumbers and my anguish caused my tears to flow. Alas! in pressing a kiss—the last, perhaps—on my daughter's forehead, she felt my tears; still half-asleep, she put her affectionate little arms round my neck, and whispered : 'Go to bed, don't be afraid. They won't come to-night, because I've asked God not to let them come!' While she was still speaking, my apartment was invaded by a horde of furious armed men, headed by the president, who had been rendered insensible to the feelings of humanity by fears for his own safety. . . . I will spare you any unnecessary details : you have already heard enough. I will tell you, however, that seals were placed upon every piece of my furniture provided with a lock, and I myself was taken to the prison of Les Carmes. Oh ! how I shuddered as I passed over the threshold still stained with the blood of the victims ! . . ."

But a few grains of sand remained in the vicomte de Beauharnais' hour-glass. Contrition for past follies and anxiety for the fate of the little ones left behind ought to have embittered those last moments. Alas ! to the very last he, like many another of his class, thought only of amusing himself. Grace Dalrymple Elliott, an Englishwoman well known as the friend of the regicide duc d'Orléans and a fellow-prisoner of Mme. de Beauharnais in the convent of Les Carmes, gives us an account in her memoirs of the meeting of the vicomtesse with her husband, when the latter was brought from the Luxemburg to share his wife's captivity.

" On arriving at Les Carmes, I was made to sleep in a room with eighteen other persons. Mme. de Beauharnais, Mme. de Custine[1] and I occupied beds close to one another, and often, after having made our beds, we used to sweep and scrub the floor, as none of our fellow-prisoners would do anything to keep it clean. Two old French gentlemen and their wives shared our room. . . . Mme. de Beauharnais had been separated from her husband, the vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais, for some time ; so we were much surprised one day to see the latter enter our room as a prisoner. He and his wife seemed momentarily embarrassed at meeting in such a place ; but they were reconciled before many hours had elapsed. They occupied a closet containing two beds. The day of the arrival of Beauharnais was a very sad day for pretty little Mme. de Custine; for on that same day her husband, a very handsome young man, son of General Custine, was taken from prison and condemned to die; he was executed on the morrow. Never have I seen a more touching sight than the adieux of this young couple. I really thought that Mme. de Custine would have tried to commit suicide; I and Mme. de Beauharnais never left her alone for three days and nights. However, she was young, lively and French by birth; six weeks later she had already recovered her spirits to such an extent that poor Mme. de Beauharnais, who appeared much attached to her husband, began to feel hurt by the latter's attentions to the charming widow. She took me into her confidence; I did everything I could to persuade Beauharnais to be more careful not to wound his wife's feelings. Far be it for me to suppose that the matter went any farther, but certainly Beauharnais was more deeply in love with Mme. de Custine than I can attempt to describe, and the amiable little woman did not appear at all annoyed by his attentions. . . ."

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[1] Delphine de Custine, daughter-in-law of Philippe de Custine mentioned on page 30.

With their parents in prison and seals placed upon the doors of their mother's apartment, Eugène and Eugénie were practically homeless. Poor young things! Providence, however, tempered the wind to the shorn lambs and sent a guardian angel in the person of Mme. Hostein, who, on learning of their pitiful plight, took them to live with her in her house in the rue Saint Dominique and kept them with her until the death of Robespierre opened the door of their mother's prison. Now Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais happened to be very intimate with Dorat-Cubières,[1] secretary to the Commune de Paris; to this functionary she wrote the following petition signed by Eugène and his sister:

"Citizens! two innocent children come to beg you to set at liberty their mother, their affectionate mother who is guiltless except for the fact that she belongs by birth to a class of society which she detests, for has she not ever chosen her friends from among good patriots and genuine

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[1] *Cubières*, Michel Chevalier de (1752–1820): an author who wrote under the names of Palmézaux and Dorat-Cubières (Dorat because this poet had been his master). He was a fervent Revolutionist, and, as secretary of the Commune, wrote the *Eloge de Marat.*

montagnards? Having asked to be allowed, according to the law of the 26th *germinal*, to visit her husband in prison, she was arrested the night after that visit without being able to guess the reason of her arrest. Citizens, you will not allow innocence, patriotism and virtue to be oppressed. Restore these unhappy children to life; they are too young to become acquainted with sorrow.

"Paris, 19 *floréal*, an II.

"Signatures: EUGÈNE BEAUHARNAIS, aged 12 years (*sic*).[1]
HORTENSE BEAUHARNAIS, aged 11 years."

Needless to say, this petition was rejected.

However, the de Beauharnais children did not want for friends. M. Calmelet[2] and a certain M. Sabatier, the brother-in-law of their governess, Marie Lanoy, were also very kind to the children and helped them to get letters to their mother and receive her replies.

During their parents' imprisonment, Eugène and Eugénie paid a visit to Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais at Fontainebleau. It was during this visit that Eugénie who, from her earliest years, seems to have been more enterprising than her brother, ran away from the "the good Fairy," as the children called her, and came up to Paris in a market-cart without her great-aunt's knowledge or permission, in the hope of seeing her imprisoned parents. In the following note, Mme. de Beauharnais chides her little daughter for her wilfulness in running away from her kind relative:

"I should be quite content with Eugénie's affection for me if she did not grieve me by her wilfulness. What, my daughter! you came up to Paris without your great-aunt's permission—nay, against her wishes? That was very naughty of you! You say that it was because you wanted to see me: you knew perfectly well that you could not do so without permission; time is required and many letters have to be written—which facts poor Victorine[1] has learnt to her cost. What is more, you jumped into M. Darret's covered cart at the risk of delaying him and preventing him delivering his goods: how very stupid of you, my child! It does not suffice to do good, we must do it properly. You, at your age, must learn to be obedient. I am obliged to tell you that I prefer your brother's calm affection to your boisterous proofs of love. However, that will not prevent me embracing you very tenderly when I know that you are safe back at Fontainebleau."

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[1] Eugène de Beauharnais was thirteen years and eight months old at this time (May 9th, 1794) according to his certificate of birth reproduced on page 23.

[2] M. Calmelet was one of the witnesses at Josephine's marriage with Napoleon. He was given the post of superintendent of the *Mobilier impérial* during the Empire. Eugène always spoke of him in most affectionate terms, and took his part on more than one occasion when his step-father was inclined to be too severe with this "friend-in-need."

Poor Eugénie! a snub was all she had got for her anxiety to see her mother. But she was to have a good many more before she became duchesse de Saint-Leu.

Those who extended their protection to imprisoned *ci-devants* did so at great risk to themselves. With a view to impressing their fellow-citizens with the fact that the young Beauharnais were imbued with the most approved-of republican principles, Mme. Hostein now made Eugénie work at a dressmaker's establishment several hours a day, while Eugène, for the second time in his short life, was apprenticed to a carpenter living in the rue de l'Echelle and within sight of the palace where his mother, ten years later, was to reign as Empress. The son of a vicomte, the future viceroy of Italy, and the adopted son of the great Napoleon, could be seen any day in the neighbouring streets clad in a workman's blue blouse, a saw hanging from his arm and carrying a plank on his shoulder. The school of adversity is a good beginning for him who has sufficient moral courage and bodily strength to set to work to learn the lessons of patience and fortitude. And this courage Eugène never lacked, neither in the months of adversity nor in the years of prosperity. He devoted much of his spare time to reading the works of Rousseau and Voltaire, which authors were looked upon as little less than divinities in those days. The all too brief experiences of military life gleaned during his visits to his father's head-quarters at Weissenburg probably accounted for the fact that Eugène also spent a good deal of time in making cardboard forts and in drawing up plans for earthworks, etc.

The children were enabled to pay several visits to their mother at the prison-convent of Les Carmes. As a turnkey was always present during these interviews the young people were obliged to keep to the most commonplace topics of conversation. And yet there were many very important questions which they were longing to ask their mother, questions concerning their father's fate, questions concerning her own fate. Luckily their governess was a woman of resources. Mme. de Beauharnais had a little lap-dog, Fortuné by name; he was not a beauty and, like most of his kind, chronic indigestion had mined his temper. But he was faithful and discreet and, on this occasion, he was of the greatest use to his fond owners. Now although two-legged visitors were not allowed to go beyond the prison *grille*, but had to be content to stand outside and converse with their unhappy friends as best they could, the same rule did not apply to four-legged visitors; and so Fortuné was free to come and go and to fetch and carry, which he did with perfect success thanks to the ingenuity of Marie Lanoy, the children's governess, who bought the young gentleman a new collar to wear whenever he went to pay his mistress a visit, and into this collar she fastened three-cornered notes containing valuable information, which Mme. de Beauharnais stealthily extracted while caressing her pet and perused when alone. The same faithful little postman bore her replies to the trembling group on the other side of the prison bars.[1]

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[1] One of Mme. de Beauharnais' servants.

In order to while the long hours in prison away, M. de Beauharnais, who had considerable talent for drawing as well as for dancing, made a pencil-portrait of Grace Dalrymple Elliott, which he very unkindly gave to Mme. de Custine instead of to his wife.

After several months' imprisonment, Alexandre was informed that he was about to be removed from Les Carmes to the Conciergerie, the ante-chamber to the grave. The dreaded summons having come at last, he now had to bid good-bye to his wife. What was said during that last interview? No reproaches, let us trust; only terms of affection and assurances of mutual forgiveness for past wrongs. What thoughts surged through the condemned man's brain as he gazed for the last time on the mother of his children? It is said that a drowning man sees the events of his whole life pass before his eyes in that brief moment before he sinks for the last time. What did Alexandre see? Resolutions, good intentions which had never ripened into glorious fruition? Plans which had never got beyond the embryo stage? He certainly had no cause to reproach himself as far as patriotism went: was he not the victim of his ideal, the Republic, that institution which was to cost many another good patriot his life, and was to die an untimely death, thanks to the excesses committed by a handful of visionaries? Just before leaving his third and last prison, the vicomte cut off a lock of his hair which he placed in an envelope and entrusted to one of his fellow-prisoners, the duchesse d'Anville, begging her, if she were ever lucky enough to escape from prison, to give it to his wife.

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[1] Poor Fortuné! he deserved a better fate; but with prosperity came pride, the pride which comes before a fall. He was spared dying the death of repletion reserved to most lap-dogs, for having resisted the too friendly advances of a four-legged plebeian, the haughty aristocrat received a bite which ended his career, to the secret delight of his mistress's much-tried second husband.

Among Alexandre de Beauharnais' travelling-companions on that brief but awful journey to the foot of the guillotine were the chevalier de Champcenets,[1] the due de Charost, the prince de Salm, whom we have already met, an Irishman (General Ward) and his servant, and an English student named Harrop from the Collège des Irlandais. As the prisoners were about to descend the steep staircase two of their number, young and therefore probably less resigned, less able to face the agony of that drive through a crowd of hostile fellow-creatures, clasped each other by the hand and flung themselves headlong over the banisters into the court below; they were killed instantly. As the list of prisoners to be executed contained fifty names, two unlucky men were chosen haphazard from among the other captives and were made to take the places of the two dead youths.

Thus on the 5th *thermidor, an III de la République une et indivisible* (July 23rd, 1794), Alexandre de Beauharnais perished on the scaffold, aged thirty-four years. Had he lived but a few more days his life would have been spared, and he and Mme. de Beauharnais would have continued, in all probability, to live more or less apart, as they had done since the birth of Eugène.

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[1] The Chevalier de Champcenets or Champcenetz (1759–94): an officer in the French guards and a celebrated wit and author, was the son of a Governor of the Tuileries. He endeavoured to kill the new ideas with scorn and ridicule, but only succeeded in losing his own life. He worked in collaboration with Rivarol, and was one of the principal contributors to the famous newspaper, *Les Actes des Apôtres.*

Several days passed before the children learned that they had lost their father. Mme. de Beauharnais, thinking that her own end could not be far distant, wrote the following letter, a sort of résumé of her life, to Eugène and his sister :

" The hand which will bring this letter to you is faithful and to be trusted : it is the hand of a friend who has experienced and shared my sufferings. . . . My children, your father has just perished on the scaffold whereon your mother is now about to perish also. As my executioners have left me alone for a few minutes before my last hour strikes, I wish to write to you. . . . My last breath shall be for you ; I wish my last words to serve as a lesson to you. . . . Oh ! my dear Alexandre ! how brief yet how delicious were the years of our union ! how long and bitter seem the days which have elapsed since death severed that union ! . . . M. de Beauharnais possessed every quality necessary to inspire affection ; I myself was capable of giving him all the love and care he needed. We loved one another with the abandonment of two young souls who, after a long search, have found the ideal affection which they were looking for. A thousand times did your father repeat to me that I was the wife of his choice, and our kind aunt Renaudin would then say that we should have disobeyed the dictates of Providence if we had resisted the feeling which prompted us to love one another. . . ."

After describing her childhood, the native customs in Martinique, and touching upon the question of slavery, Mme. de Beauharnais says :

" Your father distinguished himself among the ranks of those who supported the cause of the Revolution. He covered himself with honour ; he acted more as director than as leader. Convinced that many abuses called for reform, he wished that reform to be gradual and unaccompanied by violence. . . . The people demanded liberty : anarchy now reigns supreme ! What can stem this devastating flood? Oh God, if Thou dost not send a powerful hand to repress anarchy, we shall surely perish. As for me, my children, I am about to die as your father died, the innocent victim of the furious populace which he ever sought to calm and which has now devoured him. I bid farewell to France with feelings of hatred for her executioners whom I despise, and full of pity for her misfortunes. Honour my memory. I leave you as an heritage your father's glory and your mother's name (which some unfortunate creatures once blessed), together with our love, our regret and our blessing."

Mme. de Beauharnais owed her life to the fact that she was in such bad health at the time of her husband's execution that the Polish doctor, who had been called in to attend her at Les Carmes, asserted that she would never reach the place of execution alive.

A few days after the death of Robespierre,[1] Mme. de Beauharnais, thanks to the intervention of one of her powerful friends, the deputy Tallien,[2] was released from the prison where she had suffered such anguish. On leaving her convent-prison, she found herself nearly penniless, for the vicomte's property had been seized immediately after his death. Her first thought was to join her children. Many of her friends had disappeared for ever; nevertheless, a good many still remained, and of these a certain Mme. Doué, a Creole like herself, offered to shelter her and her children at Fontainebleau; this kind offer the widow Beauharnais gladly accepted. For some months she remained quietly in the country, endeavouring to recover her strength. But she did not remain there very long: Paris was too far away. As Mme. de Beauharnais no longer had carriages and horses at her disposal, and as her funds did not permit her to hire a conveyance, she had to travel by *diligence* whenever she wished to go up to the capital.

After a few months of Fontainebleau, the widow Beauharnais, unable to live any longer away from her beloved Paris, returned to her apartment in the rue Saint Dominique, where she, like many another relic of the old French aristocracy, lived in shabby gentility, having recourse to some rather mean subterfuges in order to gratify her ruling passion—dress. M. Frédéric Masson, an authority upon all matters connected with the life-story of the Empress Josephine, tells us that Mme. de Beauharnais lived with her children's governess, the faithful Marie Lanoy, whose savings she was not ashamed to borrow and whose salary she neglected to pay. And Marie's brother-in-law, M. Sabatier, was also persuaded to contribute towards the widow Beauharnais' furbelows and silk gowns. We are surprised to learn that Eugénie again returned to work with the mantua-maker from time to time; but Eugène, more lucky, was soon released from his apprenticeship with the carpenter; for General Hoche,[1] one of his father's friends, and a fellow-prisoner of Mme. de Beauharnais at Les Carmes, took the boy under his protection and had him to stay with him on several occasions.

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[1] *Robespierre*, Maximilien (1759–94): the Incorruptible revolutionist, and the scapegoat of his party.

[2] *Tallien* (1769–1830): denounced Robespierre in order to save his own life.

Mme. de Beauharnais still had several friends in France, friends belonging to the old nobility who, wonderful to relate, had remained in their native land and—what is still more wonderful—had contrived to keep their heads upon their shoulders. Among these fortunate persons was Mme. de Montmorin, to whom Mme. de Beauharnais owed the fact that she and her late husband had been reconciled, though that reconciliation, notwithstanding what Mme. de Beauharnais says in the letters written from her prison, was chiefly on the surface. Mme. de Montmorin provided Mme. de Beauharnais and Eugénie with some of their clothing, while Mme. Dumoulin invited the young widow to dine with her twice a week. Now bread, which is consumed in larger quantities in France than in any other country, was terribly scarce in those days; so scarce had white bread become, in fact, that it was looked upon as a luxury and invitations to dinner frequently bore the following postscript: "You are requested to bring your own bread." Mme. de Beauharnais, pleading her poverty, was exempt from this rule, and the excellent Mme. Dumoulin always saw that rolls were placed beside the plates of the pretty widow and her sprightly little daughter. Mme. de Beauharnais could not have been so very poor at that time, for we read of her giving small but recherché dinners in her own apartment. Mme. Tallien,[1] whose acquaintance Mme. de Beauharnais had made when the former was merely Mme. de Fontenay, perhaps secretly proud to receive a real vicomtesse in her own home, also invited her to her receptions, which were attended by all the influential men of the time. The fair widow probably found her children embarrassing, for how else can we account for the fact that she very soon sent them to pay a long visit to the old marquis de Beauharnais, who had left Fontainebleau and gone to reside at Saint-Germain-en-Laye ?

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[1] *Hoche*, Lazare (1768–97): general-in-chief of the Republican armies; restored order in La Vendée; his death was due to pulmonary consumption, not to poison, as some of Napoleon's enemies tried to make people believe.

When the Convention began to restore some of the property of those families who had lost relations during the Revolution, Mme. de Beauharnais, at the advice of her friends, addressed herself to Barras,[2] now one of the most powerful men of the time, and petitioned him to restore her fortune and that of her husband to her. Mme. de Beauharnais received satisfaction, whereupon she gave up her apartment in the rue Saint Dominique, the scene of so many painful events, and took a private *hôtel* in the rue Chantereine (No. 6).

General Hoche had not forgotten his promise to Mme. de Beauharnais to keep an eye upon Eugène : had he not sworn to the boy's father, when the latter was awaiting the summons to take his place in the fatal tumbril, that he would see that he came to no harm ? Had they not served together in the *armée du Rhin*, suffered together in the convent of Les Carmes ? As Eugène was only fifteen years of age, he was still too young to be placed in a regiment. Hoche, thinking that it was bad for Eugène, with his shy, retiring disposition, to be too much with women-folk, now took him from Saint Germain and made him his orderly. Hoche was a severe task-master ; however, Eugène had sense enough to understand that his protector was only severe with him because he considered that the boy would be all the better for a little severity. In after years Eugène used to say: "It was a hard but an excellent school."

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[1] *Mme. Tallien :* the celebrated beauty whose adventures as Mlle. Cabarrus, Mme. de Fontenay, Mme. Tallien, and the princesse de Chimay, are mentioned in most memoirs of the time ; she died in 1835.

[2] *Barras*, comte de (1755–1829) : *conventionnel* and member of the Directoire.

After a few months of discipline, Hoche sent Eugène to pay a visit to his mother, who was still in Paris. During this visit Mme. de Beauharnais received her husband's last gift, the envelope containing a lock of his hair together with a few words of farewell to her whom he was leaving behind him. Eugène was with her when she opened the packet; on seeing this relic of the father who, no matter what his faults had been, had loved his son very tenderly, the boy fell on his knees, burst into tears and covered the precious packet with his kisses.

In a letter written to her aunt, Mme. Fanny de Beauharnais, Eugène's mother relates another scene, rather theatrical perhaps, but nevertheless touching and very quaint with its stilted expressions.

"I must really tell you, my good aunt, about a very charming incident which has just occurred. To-day, the 7th *thermidor*, the anniversary of an all too deplorable event, I sent for Eugène, and showing him an engraving of his father, I said to him: 'Accept, my son, the reward of six months' industry and good conduct. This portrait is for you; put it in your room and look at it very often. Above all things, let him whom this picture represents serve as a model; he was the most loving and most beloved of husbands: he would have been the best of fathers.' Eugène did not utter a word; his eyes were cast down, his face was flushed; I could see how painfully agitated he was. On receiving the portrait, he covered it with his tears and kisses. My tears then began to flow; the vision of me and my son clasped in each other's arms must have been very grateful to the shade of my Alexandre.

"This evening, after all my friends except Cubières and Saint-Hérem had gone, I saw my son enter, followed by six of his young friends all wearing portraits of my Alexandre suspended from their necks by black and white ribands.

"'Behold!' said Eugène to me, 'behold the founder of a new order of knighthood; this is the head of our order,' added he, pointing to his father's portrait, 'and these are the first members,' pointing to his young companions. 'This order is to be called the *Order of Filial Affection*; if you would like to witness the inauguration ceremony, please pass with these gentlemen into the next room.' You may imagine, my good aunt, how touched I was! We followed Eugène. The little *salon*, which was tastefully decorated (I could see that Victorine had helped), was adorned with mingled garlands of roses and laurels. Quotations taken from M. de Beauharnais' speeches alternated with chandeliers laden with lights. These simple yet impressive decorations made a suitable background to a credence-table which was arranged as an altar where, amid bouquets of flowers and numerous candlesticks, I beheld the full-length portrait of my unfortunate husband. . . . Six other young companions of my son stood round the altar in respectful silence. On our arrival they drew their swords, seized my son by the hand and swore to love their parents, help one another and defend their fatherland. At this sacred word my son unfurled a little tricolour flag which he then placed beside his father's portrait. I said to him : ' He fought for these three colours and died defending them. Never forget that you are his son, and, when on the battlefield, never forget that these three colours represent liberty.' At these words we all embraced one another amid laughter and tears, and the inauguration ceremony was followed by the most amiable disorder. Oh! my kind aunt, if anything can console me for my irreparable loss it will be these children who, although they make me realize it most acutely, still help me to bear that loss. How I regret that my Hortense was not present! But she is with you, and she will read this letter; she will shed tears of joy, for her heart is filled with the same love and affection with which her brother's heart is filled."

CHAPTER II

Eugène makes the acquaintance of his future step-father—General Bonaparte pays court to Mme. de Beauharnais—Eugène is again sent to college—General Bonaparte marries the widow Beauharnais—Eugène becomes his step-father's aide-de-camp—He visits the Ionian Isles—He receives his baptism of fire in Rome—He is ordered to accompany General Bonaparte to Egypt—A strange and embarrassing visit—The taking of Jaffa—St. Jean d'Acre resists General Bonaparte—Return to France.

IN consequence of several plots—and notably that of the 13th *vendémiaire* (October 5th, 1795)—to overthrow the Republic, which having survived many "crises of growth" now seemed established on a firm basis, the Parisians were forbidden under penalty of death to keep fire-arms in their houses and were ordered to carry all weapons to the *mairies* of their respective *arrondissements*. This command was received with dismay by Eugène; how could he bear to part with his father's sword? However, there was nothing to be done but to obey. Nevertheless, Eugène, with a courage which is rather surprising in such a timid disposition as his, determined to make one effort to recover the beloved relic; so he wrote to the commander-in-chief of the conventional troops, begging him to restore the sword, which had already been seized, to its rightful owner. To his astonishment he received a reply appointing an interview. Punctually at the hour indicated—an early one, for the commander-in-chief was a very busy man—Eugène appeared at the latter's house.[1] He was received by a small, thin, sallow-faced man whose piercing dark blue eyes, shaded by a lock of lank, black hair, seemed to look into the very depths of his heart.

"My name is Eugène de Beauharnais," replied Eugène in answer to the commander's inquiries as to who he was and why he was so anxious to obtain possession of the weapon. "I am the son of a *ci-devant*, General Beauharnais, who fought for the Republic on the banks of the Rhine. My father was denounced by his enemies, dragged before the revolutionary tribunal, and assassinated three days before the fall of Robespierre."

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[1] One or two historians deny that the following scene ever took place; but as Eugène mentions it in his memoirs, we see no reason why it should not have happened. Napoleon, while at Saint Helena, also narrated the incident to O'Meara.

"*Assassinated?*" repeated the commander in a sharp tone, knitting his brows.

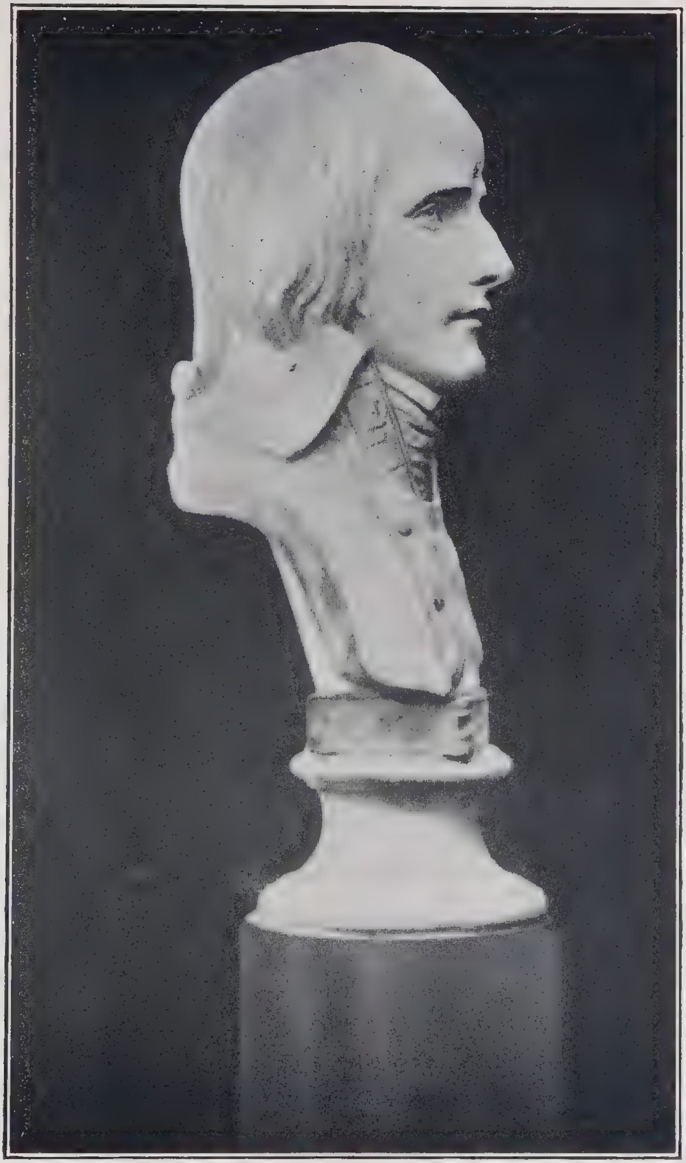
"Yes, General, assassinated! I come in my mother's name to beg you to deign to use your influence with the *Comité de salut public* and persuade them to restore to me the sword, which I wish to use in future in order to fight the enemies of my country and support the cause of the Republic."

A smile of indulgence broke over the young commander's stern face. He liked such plain speaking. Although the stripling's independent spirit had rather surprised him, he secretly admired his pluck: had he not dared to assert, and repeat his assertion, that his father had been *assassinated* by the infallible revolutionary tribunal? Such an assertion might have cost him his life a few months ago! The commander began to examine his visitor more carefully; the boy had an honest countenance; he was not handsome—Eugène never had any pretensions to being an Adonis—but the big, expressive eyes, now filled with tears, were not afraid to meet the Corsican's penetrating glance.

"Well spoken, young man!" cried General Bonaparte; "well done! I like your pluck and your devotion to your father's memory. His sword, the sword of General Beauharnais, shall be restored to you. Wait a minute!"

General Bonaparte now summoned one of his aides-de-camp and told him to bring the sword; the officer soon appeared bearing the precious souvenir of happier times. General Bonaparte with his own hand presented it to Eugène, who, unable to speak for emotion, pressed it to his lips and heart while the tears ran down his cheeks.

General Bonaparte was much touched by the boy's evident love and esteem for his dead father; had he not also lost his father at an early age? He placed his hand on Eugène's shoulder, adding in a kind voice:



(Photo: A. R. Montagu)

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE IN HIS YOUTH

From a bust by an unknown sculptor in the Museum of Ajaccio

To face page 50

"Young friend, I shall be very pleased if I can be of service to you and your mother."

Astonished at this unexpected kindness, Eugène looked up.

"You are very good, General; my mother and sister will pray for you."

This little sentence brought another smile to the General's pale face; he was unaccustomed to such promises. However, he nodded kindly to Eugène, told him to present his compliments to his mother, and ended by asking him to come and see him again. This invitation Eugène gladly accepted; but he did not come alone, for Mme. de Beauharnais, on hearing of the gracious reception accorded to her son by the already successful and influential General Bonaparte, determined to accompany him on his next visit and thank the General for his kindness to Eugène with her own lips.

General Bonaparte, less familiar with society ladies' wiles than with the art of winning laurels, was much impressed by Mme. de Beauharnais' affected airs and graces, so different from the rough manners and inelegant expressions of Signora Letizia and his sisters Elisa, Pauline and Caroline, thorough *bourgeoises* to the end of the chapter, notwithstanding their titles and their intercourse with nearly all the crowned heads in Europe. He begged Mme. de Beauharnais to allow him to call upon her at her *hôtel* in the rue Chantereine. His first visit afforded him so much pleasure that he returned again and yet again until the habit had become a rule.

Poor Eugène and Hortense (as Eugénie was now called) soon noticed that the General had become something more than an ordinary friend. Before many months had elapsed, Eugène saw that this extraordinary intimacy would end in a marriage. He tells us in his memoirs what he suffered on making this discovery: "Notwithstanding the splendour which has surrounded Napoleon since those days, I have never been able to forget the agony I endured when I realized that my mother had made up her mind to marry again. It seemed to me as if a second marriage, no matter with whom, would be bound to profane my father's memory."

General Bonaparte's opinion was now consulted on every occasion. He took a keen interest in Eugène and Hortense's education. It was probably the discovery of the fact that these two young people were opposed to her second marriage which made the widow Beauharnais pack Hortense off to Mme. Campan's[1] boarding-school for young ladies at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, while Eugène was sent to complete his studies at the so-called Collège des Irlandais in the same town, kept by Father MacDermott, formerly tutor to Mme. Campan's son.

Eugène seems, in his earlier years, and indeed practically all his life, to have been of a rather shy, retiring disposition, diffident as to his own powers. This disposition was probably answerable for one or two incidents in after-life, when even his most ardent admirers are fain to wish that he had shown a little more spirit and independence. On the few occasions when he did speak out his mind, he reaped nothing but praise. It is possible that Hortense might have been happier if she could have exchanged characters with her brother ; but we doubt whether Eugène would have earned the title of *Le Bayard du Siècle, sans peur et sans reproche,* if he had been blessed—or rather cursed—with his sister's self-will. His timidity, his desire to keep in the background (in society, not on the battlefield) may have had a physical cause ; he was always deeply emotional and very nervous ; doubtless, his stormy childhood had left some traces on his constitution. We must remember that Eugène had been much more with his father than Hortense had ever been ; he had a very vivid imagination and he had adored his father, the mere mention of whose name sufficed to bring tears to his eyes. When any of his tutors alluded to the defunct vicomte's feats of bravery, Eugène would sigh and exclaim :

" Ah ! if papa had only lived ! "

Although the Revolution had deprived him of his natural protector, Eugène was quite willing to acknowledge that it had brought many benefits to his country and abolished not a few abuses. He would astonish his tutors by his knowledge of this subject, which he was never weary of discussing. The dream of his life was to follow in his father's footsteps. On one occasion, when one of his masters was relating the story of Turenne and his brave deeds, Eugène cried with sparkling eyes :

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[1] *Mme. Campan* (1752–1822): after being *lectrice* to Marie-Antoinette, was charged by Napoleon, in 1805, to direct the house at Ecouen, belonging to the *Légion d'honneur*.

" I, too, will be a great general some day ! "

While at the Collège des Irlandais, Eugène, whose apprenticeship in the rue de l'Echelle had helped to develop his character more than anything else, made great progress in his studies. From a little note written to his mother in Paris, we learn the fact that she did not often give her children the pleasure of her company about this time.

" My dear mama, I was mightily surprised to see Thomas here yesterday. I have given him a letter for you in which I beg you to come and see me as soon as possible. You forget that I have not seen you for nearly a month, so you can imagine that your son is longing to embrace you. I hope that the weather will not prevent you coming ; it is fine just at present. Please bring me a little moist sugar and some books."

The last sentence looks as if luxuries were not plentiful at the Rev. MacDermott's establishment. Among Eugène's school-fellows was Jérôme Bonaparte, Napoleon's youngest and favourite brother. Eugène and Jérôme do not seem to have been very good friends ; Eugène was always being held up to Jérôme as a model of perfection, which the latter, naturally enough, did not relish ; however, he took care to pay Eugène out at the time of the Empress's divorce.

Mme. de Beauharnais now announced her approaching marriage with General Bonaparte to her relations and friends ; she quieted any scruples she might have felt concerning the advisability of marrying a man younger than herself, a man who although he had already had several successes, still had to make his way in life, by telling herself and her friends that she was doing so for the sake of her fatherless children, who would find in him a necessary protector. Their grief at being separated from their mother mattered little to her : had she not once before turned them over to the tender mercies of comparative strangers when she found them in her way ? And yet those children, so deep was their affection for her, were powerless to perceive her faults, faults for which Eugène, at least, was to suffer most cruelly. We can surely say that, in this case, the children's affection for their mother far outbalanced that mother's affection for them. Eugene and Hortense, at their mother's behest, wrote frequently to the Corsican general who was so soon to take the dead man's place in their home. General Bonaparte, in one of his love-letters to his betrothed, alludes to these little notes when he says :

" Kiss your amiable children for me ; they write charming letters. The fact that I am parted from you makes me love them all the more."

Scandal had lately been rather busy with Mme. de Beauharnais' good name ; certain female, and even a few male, busybodies had been circulating a report to the effect that she, after having been on too familiar terms with Hoche and Barras, was now about to make General Bonaparte the laughing-stock of *tout Paris*. However, the charming Creole had bewitched her pale Corsican lover to such an extent that he had ceased to wish to be free, and now only asked to be allowed to devote his life and his talents to making her happy and successful in society. So, on the 19th *ventôse, an IV* (March 9th, 1796), the civil marriage of Mme. de Beauharnais and General Napoleon Bonaparte was celebrated in Paris in the presence of the following witnesses : Barras, Tallien, Calmelet, Leclerc, Jean Lemarrois and the fair widow's children, Eugène and Hortense.

The nation now recognized General Bonaparte's talents by giving him command of the *armée d'Italie*, whereupon the young husband, notwithstanding the fact that he had only been married a few days, and probably realizing that his bride cared more for social success than for domestic pleasures, started for Italy. But before leaving France he sent for his stepson and, during an affectionate interview, promised to summon him to his side as soon as the boy's tutors considered his education sufficiently advanced to admit of his departure from college. Poor Eugène ! so he had to wait several long, weary months at Saint Germain. But at last in February, 1797, he received the welcome summons from his step-father to join him in Italy, where, on arriving, he found his mother, whom General Bonaparte, after having written volumes of prayers and supplications, had at last persuaded to expatriate herself and leave her beloved Paris. The general's military duties necessitated frequent absences from his wife which, we regret to say, she did not mind, so happy was she in Milan, where she was fêted and made much of to such an extent that even she, who was difficult to please in this matter, was content.

Eugène was now in his seventeenth year. The sympathy which General Bonaparte had felt for Eugène on the occasion of their first interview had ripened into affection based upon esteem for the youth's good qualities (which General Bonaparte, although often deceived in his judgment of human character, had been sharp enough to recognize), and which he proved by making him his aide-de-camp and a member of that brilliant staff of young officers, not one of whom had yet attained the age of thirty years, and whose names included those of Murat, Louis Bonaparte, Marmont, Duroc and the subject of this biography, who was the *benjamin* of them all.

It is said that General Bonaparte loved his aides-de-camp as a father loves his children ; they were all proud of the fact in those days, and one and all endeavoured to prove their gratitude and affection. But did not General Bonaparte divide his aides-de-camp into two categories : those who were carpet-knights, and those who loved the smell of gunpowder ? Eugène's subsequent career proved that he belonged to the latter, not to the former category.

The years from 1793 to 1809 read like a glorious litany of victories won by the French army, a magnificent title-roll beginning with Toulon and ending with Wagram. Eugène, from the time he joined his step-father, had a large share in these victories. He began his military career with helping to subjugate the Italian States.

During the summer of this year (1797) General Bonaparte, together with his wife and staff, left Milan and went to the château of Montebello, in the vicinity of Verona, where he was soon joined by his mother and sisters. An important ceremony was about to take place in the Bonaparte family, for the General's handsome sister Pauline was to marry General Leclerc.[1] And here the marriage took place. The little family party, notwithstanding numerous disputes such as always occur when so many interests clash together, was fairly peaceable, although Signora Letizia was rather fond of scolding and trying to make her numerous children see things exactly in the light in which she saw them herself. Eugène was still too young and too insignificant in the eyes of his stepfather's relations to incur their hatred ; and yet, although still almost a child in some ways, he was beginning to show what sort of a man he would develop into.

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[1] *Leclerc,* Victor Emmanuel (1772–1802): a French general, chiefly known to history as the husband of Pauline Bonaparte.

Poor Hortense was still at Mme. Campan's boarding-establishment for young ladies at Saint Germain ; she was growing into a pretty girl, and if she was half as lively as her mother had been at her age, she must have hated the restraint and tedious gentility of Mme. Campan, once *lectrice* to *Mesdames* the daughters of Louis XV, then lady-in-waiting to Marie-Antoinette, and now the directress of a sort of nursery-garden for the future queens, princesses and duchesses who helped to adorn Napoleon's Court with their beauty and wit.

In the month of November, 1797, Josephine returned to Paris, having spent a very happy summer and autumn. Eugène, however, had left her early in October, while the negotiations for the Peace of Campo Formio were in progress, in order to carry out a mission of inspection in the Ionian Isles which his stepfather had entrusted to him that he might show what he could do.

Eugène had a very narrow escape from assassination during his visit to Corfu, where he landed and where he was accorded a friendly reception and presented with a sword of honour bearing a flattering inscription. While absent one evening at an entertainment, the room which Eugène was inhabiting in the governor's house was invaded by three mysterious individuals armed with daggers. On finding the owner absent, they retired without touching any of the valuable articles with which his room was decorated. Eugène's servant was not endowed with much courage ; he was asleep in his master's dressing-room when the unwelcome visitors appeared, and was so terrified by their threatening attitude and their daggers that he lost his voice for some time ; however, when Eugène returned in the early morning his servant had recovered his voice and was able to tell him what had happened during his absence. It eventually transpired that these mysterious midnight visitors had come to murder not Eugène, but the person who had occupied the room before his arrival and who had made himself so unpopular in the island that he had had to leave Corfu secretly.

A fortnight was spent in the islands, at the end of which time the *Alerte* came to convey him to Naples, where he spent ten days visiting Vesuvius, etc., and then went on to Rome, where he found one of his step-father's brothers, Joseph Bonaparte, at that time ambassador at the Court of Rome. Joseph was living there with his wife and sister-in-law, Mlle. Désirée Clary by name, who was engaged to be married to General Duphot,[1] also attached to the French Embassy in Rome. Eugène was invited to remain for the wedding ; he gladly accepted the invitation.

Rome had been in an unsettled condition for some time past ; the inhabitants had expressed a wish to have their old republican government restored to them. The leaders of this movement had lately had an interview with General Duphot, when the latter, rather unadvisedly, had given them to understand that they could count upon the French government to support any efforts on their part in this direction.

On December 26th, 1797, Joseph Bonaparte received several warnings to the effect that a revolution would break out during the following night. Realizing that General Duphot had spoken too precipitately, Joseph informed the leaders of the movement that the Directoire would certainly repress any attempt at revolt on the part of the populace against the authority of the sovereign pontiff[2] ; he added that he would immediately communicate with the French government upon the subject. The revolutionists, keenly disappointed, left the Embassy promising to do nothing until they had heard from him again. That same evening, towards nightfall, Joseph received a visit from the Spanish ambassador, a personal friend of his, who informed his fellow-functionary that he had just learnt from the Pope's secretary that a revolution was about to break out—not against the Papal government, however, but against the representatives in Italy of the Directoire. Strange to say, both parties seemed equally well aware of each other's plans. The supporters of this second movement had worked so skilfully that they had nearly succeeded in persuading the Holy Father that his life was in danger owing to France's treacherous behaviour in supporting the revolutionists.

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[1] *Duphot,* Léonard (1770 (?)–97) : distinguished himself during the Italian campaign in 1796 ; he was the author of a fine ode : *Aux manes des héros morts pour la liberté.*

[2] *Pope Pius VI* (1775–99).

A meeting of the would-be republicans took place on the morrow, December 27th, at the Villa Medici, when it was noticed that many of those present wore tricolour cockades. This meeting, however, came to a sudden conclusion, for some Papal guards appeared, whereupon a miniature battle ensued, during which two dragoons were killed. Matters were not improved by the discovery, after the fray, of a great sackful of tricolour cockades. On learning of this encounter, Joseph Bonaparte hurried off to the house of Cardinal Doria Pamfili, the Secretary of State, informed him that he had had no idea that such a meeting was going to take place, and, in order to prove his innocence, offered to allow certain strangers, who, it was reported, had taken refuge in the French Embassy, to be arrested, if, on a search being made, any such should be found. Joseph then returned to the Embassy. He was about to sit down to dinner with his family, when loud cries were heard in the street outside ; on looking out of the window, he beheld a huge concourse of people who immediately began to cry : "Long live the Republic ! Long live the Roman people ! " as soon as they caught sight of the representative of the French government. One of the leaders then asked to be allowed to speak to Joseph. This man, who gave himself out as an artist, demanded protection for himself and for his unfortunate compatriots ; he was rather taken aback when Joseph recommended him and his "unfortunate compatriots" to retire as quickly and as quietly as possible or he, Joseph, would not be responsible for what might happen. But the crowd, which contained many well-known police-spies, only continued to grow in volume. In short, the vehemence with which the manifestants yelled : "Long live the Republic ! Long live the Roman people ! " made Joseph think that the whole affair was a trap laid by the Papal government ; he therefore determined to act in such a manner that neither the Holy Father nor the French government at home could find fault with his conduct.

Several French officers belonging to the Embassy staff, together with his guest Eugène, offered to help him disperse the crowd. Clad in his official costume, Joseph was just preparing to go outside the palace accompanied by these officers and several employés at the Embassy and order the crowd to disperse, when shots were heard in the distance. A detachment of cavalry now appeared, and was greeted by still louder cries of: "Long live the Republic! Long live the Roman people!" to which it replied by charging and slashing left and right at the crowd. The latter, surprised and terrified, rushed into the courtyard of the Embassy, burst open the great doors, and fled shrieking up the staircases and along the corridors in all directions. The Papal soldiers, in hot pursuit, invaded the grounds of the French Embassy looking for more victims. Now General Duphot, who was a very hot-tempered man, was enraged at this proceeding and swore that he would avenge this insult to the government of his fatherland. Seizing his sword, he ordered the other officers to follow him. The corridors of the Embassy were filled with dead and dying. Joseph now advanced to parley with the Papal troops, who continued to arrive in still greater numbers. On seeing his threatening attitude, the invaders of French territory began to beat a retreat. Joseph then ordered the captain—a certain Amadeo—to step forward. No reply. The Papal soldiers still retreating, the revolutionists, emboldened by this fact, determined to sally forth from their stronghold and try to retrieve their losses. But Joseph saw that such a step would only draw down terrible retribution upon the would-be republicans, so he forbade them to leave the grounds of the Embassy and, in order to make them obey him, drew his sword, telling General Duphot and his adjutant Sherlock to do the same. This time the refugees were obedient. The Papal troops, however, again advanced, and recommenced firing. Although Joseph and his officers were unhurt, several men in the front ranks of the revolutionists fell mortally wounded. During the brief interval while the Papal soldiers were reloading their guns, Joseph commanded Eugène and an official named Arrighi not to allow the insurgents to leave the grounds of the Embassy on any pretext whatever (which they were clamouring to do in order to revenge their dead); he then advanced, together with Duphot and Sherlock, towards the Papal troops in the hope of persuading them not to fire again. General Duphot, accustomed to face danger on the field of honour, rushed up to the foremost rank, bravely seized two of the guns which were pointed at his breast, and besought the soldiers to cease firing and not to charge again. His voice was drowned by a volley of shots. About twenty of the insurgents inside the Embassy grounds fell dead. The Papal soldiers then retreated, dragging Duphot with them, as far as the Porta Settimiana, where Joseph and Sherlock, who, powerless to rescue their comrade, had followed them at a distance, saw poor Duphot's end. A soldier discharged the contents of his gun at him; although badly wounded, Duphot, with the help of his trusty sword, managed to crawl a few yards along the ground towards Joseph and Sherlock, who were calling him by name, when another bullet felled him to the earth; a second later, fifty shots rang out on the still evening air. As Joseph and Sherlock could do nothing more for their dead comrade, and as they were in danger of sharing his fate, the adjutant persuaded his chief to return to the Embassy, which they did with a good deal of trouble, having to climb over the walls of the garden belonging to the building, where they found Eugène and Arrighi much exercised as to their safety and very indignant at the rough treatment which they had received during Joseph's absence at the hands of the refugees. The threshold of the Embassy was drenched with blood; about twenty corpses lay in a heap, while groans from the wounded could be heard on all sides. Joseph, fearing another attack, ordered the gates of the Embassy to be barricaded and all the shutters to be bolted.

Eugène throughout the affair had distinguished himself by his coolness and pluck; this was his baptism of fire. He found to his cost that excited Italians were not easy to handle; one individual, in especial, a certain Ceracchi, who later suffered capital punishment for an attempt upon the life of the First Consul, was so particularly keen to avenge poor Duphot, that Eugène had to strike him repeatedly with the flat of his sword before he could make him listen to reason.

Joseph found his wife and sister-in-law nearly crazy with anxiety. General Duphot was to have married pretty Désirée Clary on the morrow. Unlucky Désirée! Fate and unkind relations had already prevented her marrying General Bonaparte, as he had certainly wished to do at one time; and now General Duphot was no more! That brave heart had ceased to beat. And they were anxious, too, for the safety of Mme. Clary, Joseph's mother-in-law, and for her youngest son; they, however, were in safety with kind friends.

Night had fallen. Shots were again heard in the distance, then coming nearer, and at last striking and smashing the shutters of the Embassy. The little fortress was sadly in need of protectors; three of the servants were missing, two were too badly wounded to do anything but lie still and groan, while the others, although provided with fire-arms, were not accustomed to handling them. During a pause in the firing, the French officers, unable to bear the thought of the mangled corpse of their brave comrade lying alone, abandoned and exposed to the insults of any casual passer-by, expressed their intention of going to fetch it. A little band composed of these courageous volunteers and of some of the Embassy servants now sallied forth to look for Duphot's remains. By choosing a roundabout path, they managed to avoid meeting the Papal troops, and eventually reached the spot where they had last seen their friend. His corpse, stripped naked, riddled with bullets and pierced by bayonets, was found under a heap of stones. The captain of the murderers—Amadeo—had taken the general's sword and belt; a priest from a neighbouring parish had helped himself to his watch; the common soldiers had taken all that remained—his clothes. When Joseph saw the poor mangled body he swore to shake the dust of Rome off his feet as soon as he could obtain passports for himself and for his family.

As the battle had now been going on for six hours and seemed likely to continue until dawn, Joseph wrote to Cardinal Doria Pamfili telling him what had happened—he must have known all about it long ago—inviting him to come and see for himself to what a state of siege they were reduced; he concluded his letter thus: "The palace of France is being besieged; it is urgent that either you yourself, or some member of the government, or somebody whom you can trust, should come here. I hope that you will come in person. You will experience no difficulty in getting here."

The firing having stopped for a time, a messenger was despatched with this letter to the Cardinal-Secretary of State; the messenger, after having been beaten and grossly insulted by the Papal troops posted in the neighbouring streets, was allowed to go on his way. A carriage containing an individual who, alas! wore no red robes, drove up to the French Embassy soon after the departure of Joseph's messenger; this visitor was the chevalier Angiolini, one of Joseph's most trusted friends, who, with great difficulty, had persuaded the Papal soldiers to allow him to pass. When asked by them whether he liked danger and the smell of gunpowder, he replied with the greatest sang-froid that "nobody could possibly be in any danger in the French Embassy in Rome."

A few minutes later another of Joseph's friends, the chevalier Azara, the Spanish ambassador, who only the day before had warned him of what was about to happen, appeared upon the scene. Both gentlemen expressed their indignation at the whole affair and their surprise that Joseph had received no reply to his letter. At their advice, Joseph wrote a second letter to Cardinal Doria Pamfili asking for passports and for post-horses, as he intended leaving Rome at once. Again no notice was taken of his letter.

Joseph now begged MM. Azara and Angiolini to represent him and to look after the interests of the French residents in Rome. At six o'clock on the following morning he, Eugène and his whole family left for Florence, where they were sheltered by the French ambassador, M. Cacault.

Joseph Bonaparte hastened to send full details of this scandalous affront to the government at home in France. In his letter he says:

"I should consider myself guilty of gross injustice towards the Republic if I did not insist upon the Directoire taking immediate measures to revenge this outrage. . . . The Papal government is never weary of evil-doing; it is crafty and bold when it wishes to commit a crime, but when once that crime has been committed, it becomes servile and cowardly. To that government we owe the murder of M. Basseville. It is now grovelling at the feet of M. Azara, beseeching him to hurry off to Florence and persuade me to return to Rome with him. . . ."

The murder of M. Basseville to which Joseph Bonaparte alludes in the above letter was the first link in the chain of circumstances which led to the formation of the Roman Republic. Nicolas Jean Hugon de Basseville was secretary to the French legation in Naples when, happening to be on a secret mission to Rome, on January 13th, 1793, he was attacked by a mob for allowing his servants to wear tricolour cockades. Seeing himself in danger of being stoned to death, he returned to his lodgings ; but even here he was not safe, for an individual soon after broke into his room and slashed him so terribly with a razor that he succumbed to his injuries within a few hours. The Convention adopted his son in the name of the Republic.

Pope Pius VI, realizing that he had gone too far, and being in bad health at that time and in dread of reprisals on the part of the French government, did his very best to persuade Joseph Bonaparte to return to his post in Rome. But Joseph had had enough of Italy for the time being ; he saw that all these popular disturbances would lead to a great upheaval, and he, like the Pope's own nephew, Cardinal Braschi, who had already fled to Naples, had no intention of assisting at any more scenes similar to that which he had lately witnessed—not if he could help it, at least. So Joseph, together with his family, Eugène and the French officers, returned to Paris.

Among General Bonaparte's aides-de-camp was a certain Lavalette,[1] of humble origin, who, during the campaign in Italy, had proved himself worthy of his general's esteem and affection. Now General Bonaparte thought that he could show no greater proof of his favour than to give some member of his family, or of his wife's family, in marriage to his servitors. Had he not just married his sister Pauline to General Leclerc, and did he not, in 1800, give his sister Caroline to Murat ? He therefore expressed a wish that Lavalette should marry Mlle. Emilie de Beauharnais,

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[1] *Lavalette*, Marie Joseph Chamans, comte de (1769–1830): aide-de-camp to Napoleon, then director of the Post Office.

Hortense's cousin, at that time finishing her education with General Bonaparte's sister Caroline and his step-daughter at Mme. Campan's establishment at Saint Germain.

When Lavalette expressed doubts as to whether Mlle. Emilie, whom he had never seen, who was still scarcely more than a child, and who knew nothing of the world outside the walls of her school, would consent to marry him, a soldier, General Bonaparte cut him short with a remark that he was talking nonsense, that her consent was unnecessary, and ended by telling him—almost *ordering* him—to marry her.

During an interview that same evening with M. Lavalette, Mme. Bonaparte informed him that they were to go on the morrow to Saint Germain, when Lavalette would be introduced to his future wife; she added as an afterthought: "You will be delighted with her; she is even handsomer than my daughter, and that is saying a good deal."

On the morrow, General and Mme. Bonaparte, Eugène de Beauharnais and Lavalette drove to Mme. Campan's house, the windows of which were packed with young ladies dressed in their best bibs and tuckers and all on tiptoe with excitement and curiosity to know the reason of this visit, to which they owed the fact that they had been given a whole holiday. While the guests were strolling round the garden, Mme. Bonaparte sent Hortense and Caroline to fetch her niece Emilie de Beauharnais. The appearance of his future bride, who was looking her loveliest on that fresh spring day, reduced the brave warrior to a state of mute ecstasy and admiration; however, he recovered himself while helping to hand refreshments to the guests and their friends. Eugène now proposed that he, Mlle. Emilie and Lavalette should inspect the grounds; on reaching a secluded alley, Eugène was kind enough to walk on ahead of the young people, when M. Lavalette plucked up sufficient courage to address the bride whom he had been told to marry. He represented to the blushing Emilie that he was a poor man, that his sword was all he possessed, and that his only chance of success in life rested on the kindness of his general, with whom he was to go to Egypt before another fortnight had elapsed.

Mlle. Emilie listened in silence; then, with lowered gaze and a smile which made the honest fellow blush with pleasure, she took the bouquet of flowers she was wearing in her bodice and presented it to him, her accepted lover.

When once General Bonaparte had made up his mind to do a thing, it had to be done immediately: forty-eight hours later Mlle. Emilie de Beauharnais became Mme. Lavalette. But we shall hear more of her.

On April 22nd, 1798, Eugène received the following letter from his step-father:

> "You will be so good as to start to-morrow morning at 4 o'clock with citizen Fister and my wife's waiting-woman, with citizen Hébert and my own coachman on the box. You will go to Lyons, via Auxerre and Châlons. You must inquire in both towns as to whether my grooms, my servants, and my effects which left Paris on the 2nd and my baggage which was sent to Châlons, have arrived at either of those places or when we may expect them to reach Lyons. On reaching Lyons, you will put up at an inn on the place Bellecour, *ci-devant* Palais Royal, if the house is still in existence; after which you will go to the Hôtel de Provence and inquire if Duroc and Lavigne have got boats prepared for us. You must lay in a store of all sorts of provisions for the two days we shall be on the Rhone. You must ship my two carriages and see that everything is in readiness so that I can start as soon as I reach Lyons. Nobody is to be told that I am expected. . . ."

Lyons was the first halt on the way to Toulon, at which seaport General Bonaparte was to embark for his successful Egyptian campaign. Eugène and his comrades reached Toulon some days before the General, who joined them May 9th. Eight days later they all embarked on the *Orient*; and on the 19th the fleet, bearing 36,000 troops, sailed for Egypt. On this occasion General Bonaparte took eight aides-de-camp with him. The jealousy of the Bonapartes for Eugène was much increased by the fact that he had been chosen to accompany their successful brother; but perhaps they comforted themselves with the thought that fever or a stray bullet might remove the young Beauharnais from their path, in which case General Bonaparte would soon forget that the valiant, warm-hearted youth had ever come into his life. General Bonaparte's adoration for his wife and his affection for her children by her first husband really caused them to suffer torments of jealousy about this time.

On June 9th the French fleet reached Malta, which island, with its splendid geographical position, General Bonaparte had determined to seize. Having posted the different vessels belonging to his fleet along the sea-coast from the island of Gozo to the port of Marsa-Scirocco, he asked permission to enter the harbour of Malta ; this permission the Knights, who were not all of one mind concerning the matter, accorded, limiting, however, the number of vessels to four. Now General Bonaparte was not in the habit of allowing people to dictate their terms to him ; this reservation gave him the excuse he wanted ; he promptly landed his troops in three columns, two of which were sent to attack Valetta, while the third was ordered to reduce the island of Gozo to submission.

On the morning of June 11th, Eugène received commands to join General Desaix,[1] who, towards evening of that same day, sent him to help Marmont.[2] The garrison of Malta had just made a sally ; but Marmont was ready. He repulsed the attack and captured five flags, one of which Eugène wrested from the hands of a Knight of Malta. Eugène's pride at capturing this trophy, his modest demeanour when sent by Marmont to present the five flags to General Bonaparte on the *Orient*, only helped to endear him to his step-father.

To General Bonaparte's honour be it said that he forbore to bombard the island, an operation which would have facilitated conquest, because it had come to his knowledge that certain desperadoes in Malta had sworn to murder all the Knights at the first bomb, and so he determined not to have recourse to this extreme measure.

Marmont's victory was followed on the morrow by negotiations which ended in a peace being signed : twenty-four hours later General Bonaparte entered Valetta. Satisfied with this victory, the general now continued his voyage towards Egypt. The island of Candia was sighted on June 30th, and at daybreak on the morrow the *Tour aux Arabes* on the African coast was distinctly visible. A few hours later the minarets of the town of Alexandria were seen hanging like a *fata morgana* in the sky and reflected in the blue waves of the Mediterranean. A terrific storm arose soon after the fleet came in sight of the haven where it would be.

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[1] *Desaix*, Louis Charles Antoine (1768–1800) : a French general, whose heroic death at Marengo placed him among the immortals of French history.

[2] *Marmont*, duc de Raguse (1774–1852) : marshal of France, concluded the treaty which gave Paris into the hands of the Allies (1815).

Forty-three days had now elapsed since General Bonaparte had left Toulon, and he was impatient to begin operations. The first struggle, which took place on July 2nd, was short but sharp, and was attended with losses on both sides. Kléber,[1] one of the general's truest friends, was wounded, as was Menou. The Alexandrians, in their common peril, had joined the Turkish garrison; both forces fought bravely and resisted the *roumis*[2] to the best of their ability. But no matter how bravely they might fight, the *furia francese* won the day. After peace had been signed, Eugène received orders to take some troops into the interior of the town, there to repress any efforts at rebellion or rioting. This expedition was attended with considerable danger, as Eugène found when he and his men were walking along the narrow streets, for a volley of bullets was suddenly discharged from a house which, from the number of shots fired, seemed to contain several inhabitants determined to resist the invader. Shouting to his men to follow him, Eugène burst the door open, only to find an old man crouching behind a narrow window and surrounded by ten or twelve muskets which his wife and children loaded and handed to him as soon as one had been discharged.

General Bonaparte was now free to begin his triumphant march towards Cairo and the Pyramids, those stone sentinels which had witnessed the struggles of so many generations of human ants. The French troops found warfare on the burning sands of Egypt a very different thing from warfare in Europe; they suffered much from the blazing sun, the sandstorms and the scarcity of drinking-water. On reaching the wells, some of which were ten or twelve leagues apart, the soldiers frequently discovered that the contents had been already drained by the vanguard. Water-melons were very abundant, but not very wholesome, as the French troops found to their cost. Had General Bonaparte's campaign ended in disaster, kind friends would have said it was his own fault for undertaking such an expedition at such a time of year in such a country.

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[1] Kléber, Jean Baptiste (1753-1800): an illustrious French general, was murdered at Cairo.

[2] Name given by the Arabs to the French soldiers.

When nearing Damanhour, the French army had an encounter with a tribe of Arabs ; the latter's plan of warfare was to harass the enemy, attack them at unexpected times, and seize any stragglers imprudent enough to get separated from their companions. As the Arab chiefs, in order to stimulate the mamelukes' courage, had offered large rewards for the heads of the French soldiers, all prisoners were promptly despatched. The Nile now being very low, many of the wells were dry, which circumstance added terribly to the sufferings of the French troops. When the great army finally came in sight of the village of El-Houat, which was nothing more than a group of hovels, the soldiers shouted for joy ; here at last they would find the water for which they all longed so ardently. Alas ! great was their disappointment when they learnt that the wells, on their approach, had been emptied by the natives, who, however, had taken care to reserve sufficient water for their own use. The French troops, with admirable self-restraint, instead of taking the water from the Arabs by force, as they might have done, offered to pay for what they required ; as much as six francs were paid for a gourd full of muddy water so maladorous that they would have refused to drink it at any other time ; now they were thankful to get any water at all. Alas ! in after years Napoleon the Emperor was not so merciful as General Bonaparte.

On July 20th the village of Embabeh was seen in the golden distance ; here it was that General Bonaparte and Mourad Bey were to meet and decide the fate of Egypt.

Before attacking the enemy, General Bonaparte made his famous speech in which he, pointing to the Pyramids, sought to encourage his troops by this exhortation :

" Soldiers ! remember that forty centuries are watching you from the summit of these monuments ! "

But his soldiers did not need encouragement by word of mouth: was not one glance from that eagle eye sufficient to instil courage into the heart of the weakest? How can we account for the fact that General Bonaparte was able to gather that triple pleiad of great generals round him: Kléber, Hoche, Lannes, Davout, Ney, Soult, Rapp, Junot, Bessières, Lauriston, Jourdan, Lavalette, Desaix, Berthier, Bernadotte, Duroc and the five M.'s—Masséna, Macdonald, Murat, Moreau and Marmont—not to mention their numerous satellites, except that he possessed some magnetic power which forced all those who came in contact with him to obey his will? What became of all these generals after the master-brain which had inspired them, led them to victory, had been ingulfed in gloom? Of those whom death spared—and theirs was not the happier lot—more than one bit the hand which had pointed the way to glory and fortune; one and all sank into oblivion.

General Bonaparte's troops proved by their prowess that they had understood his meaning; success was assured. Eugène and his brother aides-de-camp were exposed to considerable danger during the celebrated Battle of the Pyramids, for the French troops fought at such close quarters with the enemy's cavalry that the general's aides-de-camp, in carrying orders, ran the double risk of being struck by their compatriots' bullets and of being slashed by the mamelukes' scimitars.

Eugène says:

"We were by no means idle during our stay in Cairo; the general sent us every day to reconnoitre the desert, and not a day passed in which we did not have to encounter either a tribe of Arabs or mamelukes. On two occasions I was sent out at night, but without any result worth mentioning. About this time, the general began to suffer from great depression of spirits, caused either by the discontent which reigned among a certain portion of the army, and especially among the superior officers, or else by unsatisfactory news from France with which people tried to disturb his domestic happiness. Although I was very young, he trusted me sufficiently to confide his troubles to my ear. It was usually at night that he, while pacing up and down his tent, took me into his confidence. I was the only person to whom he could unbosom himself. I tried to pacify him;

I consoled him as well as I could and as well as my youth and my respect for him would allow me to do. . . ."

M. Joseph Turquan, in his *Wife of General Bonaparte,* tells us the nature of the news from France ; that news, alas ! contained the first hint that things were not as they ought to be, and from this moment General Bonaparte began to entertain suspicions of his wife's conduct.

Eugène was now sent by his step-father to pay a visit to the wife of Mourad Bey, the chief of the mamelukes, who had been abandoned by her husband together with the rest of his seraglio. Eugène gives an amusing account of this visit in his memoirs :

" Some French officers, among others Rapp, had been stabbed while walking in the streets of Cairo ; although the culprits had hitherto escaped scot-free, we had every reason to believe that some mamelukes lay concealed in the town. The house of Mourad Bey was suspected to be their hiding-place. I went at the general's command to see the chief's wife in order to assure her that her house and property would be respected and that she could count upon the protection of the French, provided that she ceased all communication with the enemy and that she promised not to shelter any of the miscreants. Mme. Mourad Bey was most polite to me and graciously offered me a cup of coffee with her own hands. She promised to fulfil all the conditions required of her and, in order to convince me that no suspicious persons lay concealed in her house, she begged me to search the place with her. We first went through several great rooms situated on the ground-floor in which were piled numerous cushions and rugs of all shapes and sizes. I must confess that I felt somewhat nervous, fearing lest one of those mamelukes, who are so clever in the art of cutting off people's heads, should spring out from beneath these cushions and rugs. The first floor was occupied by the women belonging to Mourad Bey's harem ; a certain number of females were in each room. It was here that a very grotesque and a very embarrassing scene was enacted. These women evidently thought me something strange ; they became extremely inquisitive ; they gathered round me, pushed and jostled me, fingered my clothes and even tried to take them off. In vain Madame ordered them to withdraw; in vain did I myself try to push them away—not too gently, either. At last Madame had to summon the eunuchs, who beat the women and finally managed to make them leave go of me. . . ."

Mme. Mourad Bey was so pleased with General Bonaparte's treatment of her that she sent him several presents, including a magnificent shawl (which Josephine afterwards wore when Empress) and her husband's fire-arms.

We may be sure that Eugène keenly enjoyed being employed by his step-father, although it might be on such peaceful errands as the above-mentioned visit to the wife of a fallen chieftain. He was ever on the look-out for occasions upon which to distinguish himself; he was always the first to offer his services whenever there was any particularly dangerous mission to be accomplished. General Bonaparte had remarked this fact with considerable satisfaction; he was proud of the young fellow's bravery; nevertheless he considered it his duty to check Eugène's impulsiveness, and he said on one occasion, in that particularly severe tone which always had such a salutary effect upon his soldiers—and upon many a crowned head as well: "Young man, you must learn that we, in our profession, must never run to meet danger; we must be content to do our duty and do it well: the rest is in God's hands."

While in Egypt, Eugène was fated to endure some very bitter moments, owing to his step-father's inconsiderate behaviour with the beautiful Mme. Fourès, nicknamed "Our Lady of the East" by his soldiers. Poor Eugène was indeed placed in an undesirable position; his duty towards his superior officer obliged him to ride behind the carriage in which General Bonaparte and Mme. Bonaparte's *remplaçante* drove out in the cool of the evening. At last Eugène could bear this state of affairs no longer. In doubt as to whether he ought to write and inform his mother of what was going on or to say nothing, he went to see General Berthier[1] and begged him to give him a post, no matter how small, in some other regiment where he would not be obliged to endure this daily humiliation. General Bonaparte was inclined to be very angry with his step-son when he heard what he had done ; however, the youth's conduct had one good result, for the general in future refrained from appearing in public with the lady in question. Eugène continued to be his aide-de-camp ; indeed, their relations became even more friendly after this little episode.

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[1] *Berthier*, Alexandre (1753–1815): first served in America, then returned to France, where he commanded the National Guard of Versailles, and in this capacity protected the royal family. In 1796 he was sent to Italy, where he made the acquaintance of General Bonaparte and became one of his most intimate friends. In 1798 he took possession of Rome,

On October 1st of this same year (1798) a violent insurrection broke out in Cairo. On that particular day Eugène happened to be on duty with his step-father, and it was only by the merest chance that he was not chosen, instead of his Polish colleague Sulkowski, to accomplish a mission which cost the latter his life.

In the following month General Bonaparte, having decided that the port of Suez would be a valuable possession, sent General Bon to seize the place in his name. Eugène led the vanguard. This was the first time that General Bonaparte had entrusted a mission of any real importance to his step-son ; it was likewise the first time that a small detachment of troops had been sent into the desert to face unknown dangers and the all too frequent want of water with its terrible consequences to man and beast. Throughout the Egyptian campaign the scarcity of water was one of the greatest difficulties General Bonaparte had to face.

During this expedition some of the soldiers, after marching for four days under a broiling sun, seized their leather water-bottles and slashed them so that the precious contents ran out. If they thought that this conduct would force their general to return to Cairo they were mistaken. Eugène was powerless to prevent this act of insubordination and foolhardiness. In his indignation he, although only a beardless youth, struck several of the grenadiers who had

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overthrowing the pontifical government and establishing the Republic. He accompanied General Bonaparte to Egypt and went through the campaigns of Marengo, Austerlitz and Jena. He helped to win the Battle of Wagram, and was rewarded with the titles of prince de Neufchâtle, vice-chancellor and prince de Wagram. He married a niece of the King of Bavaria. Although he disapproved of the Russian campaign he took part in that most disastrous affair. He was one of the first men of importance to welcome the Bourbons back to France. When Napoleon returned from Elba, Berthier hastened to leave his country and take refuge with his father-in-law at Bamberg. The cause of his death from a fall out of a window soon after has never been explained.

served with his step-father in Italy. General Bon was determined not to be frustrated; at last the little column, after much suffering, reached Suez. Luckily the enemy fled at the approach of the *roumis*, and so the place was taken without any trouble. On this occasion General Bonaparte sent the two following letters to his step-son, who had now had an opportunity to show what he was worth.

"CAIRO,
"*December* 11*th*, 1798.

"I am glad to see from your letter that you have entered Suez leading the vanguard. March with the infantry. Do not trust the Arabs, and be sure to sleep under canvas. Write to me at every opportunity. "NAPOLEON."

"CAIRO,
"*December* 16*th*, 1798.

"I have received your letter, *citoyen*, together with the drawing which you had promised to send me; it is very well done. I see by the number on your last letter that I have received all your letters. Take care not to sleep in the open air with your eyes uncovered. I embrace you.
"NAPOLEON."

A few days later General Bonaparte determined to join General Bon and Eugène at Suez. While crossing a branch of the Red Sea he was nearly drowned owing to his obstinacy in crossing by night. One of his generals, Dufalgua by name, was the only person, however, who was really in danger, and he, owing to the fact that he had a wooden leg which he would insist upon putting into the holes with which the ford abounded, found himself in a very perilous position. He had to stand a good deal of banter during the march across the desert. His men would point at him, nudge one another and mutter: "It's all the fault of that damned old wooden leg that we are here!" Whereupon one more witty than his brothers in arms would say: "*Pardieu!* he don't care: he's always sure to have one foot in France no matter what happens!" alluding to the leg which General Dufalgua had lost during the wars of the Revolution. Strange to say, the speakers did not seem to mind whether their general heard or not. This may appear a little surprising to those who are unacquainted with French military life ; but the same familiarity between officers and their men existed then as now. General Bonaparte was the first to treat his men as his children, a miracle-working term in the mouth of such a man. The old days of making nobly born children of seven years of age generals in the French army had passed with many another folly.

On returning to Cairo, Eugène, although only eighteen years of age, was given the rank of lieutenant, which title he had earned. Early in the February of the following year General Bonaparte, ever restless and eager to add fresh laurels to the already abundant sheaf, began his expedition to Syria. After marching for three days, the army reached El-Arish on February 9th (1799), which stronghold, protected by a remarkable wall, had to be taken before General Bonaparte could go further. One moonlight night, while the fort was being besieged, Eugène received orders to go with twenty-five of his men and take possession of a group of huts whose inhabitants, by their ceaseless firing, were causing the French army considerable losses. The bright moonlight enabled the enemy to take good aim at the little band, and Eugène lost seven of his men before he was able to silence their firing ; after telling the remaining eighteen men to stay there until he returned, Eugène hastened towards the camp. On his way back, however, he caught his foot in the roots of a bush and fell so heavily that he was unable to rise for some time. A rumour that he had been shot was circulated ; just as General Bonaparte had made up his mind that his step-son had perished and that he would have to write the fatal news to the youth's mother in France, the young lieutenant appeared unhurt except for a very badly sprained foot. The fort surrendered on the morrow, when the army moved on towards Gaza. Owing to the ignorance or ill-will of their guides the French troops lost their way and narrowly escaped capture by the mamelukes, those human vultures which hovered ceaselessly round the army, in order to escape whose unwelcome attentions General Bonaparte, knowing that they never attack by night, beat a retreat with his army one evening and so gave them the slip. On this occasion Eugène's horse, worn out by heat and fatigue, fell down exhausted and its master was forced to accomplish the remainder of the journey on foot.

It was about this time that Eugène had cause to be very grateful towards General Duroc,[1] his step-father's principal aide-de-camp. Eugène, the youngest member of General Bonaparte's staff, had received commands to carry some orders at midnight to Kléber, who was camping a few miles away in the direction of Ramleh. Overcome with fatigue, Eugène, after telling his orderly to wake him in time, threw himself on his bed. The servant obeyed, but, alas! Eugène only turned over on the other side and in two seconds was as sound asleep again as ever. Duroc, although probably equally tired, was at his post, and when he saw that Eugène did not appear, he went to his tent and expostulated with him for his laziness, reminding him that it was his duty to start at once, that his honour depended upon this mission, insignificant as it might seem. At the word honour Eugène started up: he needed no more pressing.

On reaching Ramleh, Eugène was sent, together with twenty-five men, to reconnoitre the valley leading to Jerusalem; he went within sight of the Sacred City, but was prevented from visiting it, as he should have liked to have done, by the inhabitants and the Arabs, who were evidently determined not to allow him to enter. He tells us that he was the only French officer who saw Jerusalem during this campaign.

The taking of Jaffa, the oft-besieged city, called by the Jews *Joppe*, or *The Beautiful*, was a lengthy matter; the siege was rendered particularly horrible by the plague, which raged not only among the unfortunate besieged, but also among the besiegers. General Bonaparte, desirous of encouraging his men, touched several of the plague patients. Was he not ever the fatalist, a believer in the theory that: "Fate hath already said what shall betide"?

"That Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

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[1] *Duroc*, duc de Frioul (1772–1813): grand marshal of the palace of Napoleon I, and an illustrious general; he was killed by a bullet at Wurschen.

Another horrible incident connected with the taking of Jaffa was the massacre of its inhabitants by the French troops after the city had surrendered. The scenes witnessed by Eugène, who was sent by his step-father to put a stop to this awful carnage—for which, we must add, General Bonaparte was not responsible—made a great impression upon the soft-hearted youth, who in after years, when arrived at man's estate, had to witness other equally horrible scenes.

Three days after the taking of Jaffa, General Bonaparte moved on towards St. Jean d'Acre, where he arrived March 17th. Commodore Sidney Smith, on the previous evening, had captured a French flotilla, the guns of which were employed by him to defend Acre. We will now let Eugène tell us what he did when sent to reconnoitre Caïffa :

" I, together with four *chasseurs*, had been sent by General Bonaparte on the previous evening to reconnoitre Caïffa in order to make sure that the town was occupied and defended by the enemy. On arriving a little way from the town, we perceived a great concourse of people on the walls, without, however, being able to ascertain whether they were armed or not. I continued to advance with my four men, for I was anxious to draw their fire so that I might be certain that the place was occupied and defended ; but on our approach nearly all these people disappeared ; I then made signs to those who remained on the walls to descend and open the gate. Hardly was it opened, when I, by a sort of inspiration, galloped into the town, followed by my four *chasseurs*. An English boat, commanded by a distinguished officer, had just left the shore and was making off as fast as it could. We discharged our guns and several pistols in its direction, but without any effect ; the shots which were fired at us in return were equally resultless. I learnt later that the superior officer was Commodore Sidney Smith, who was commanding the English fleet in those waters. This was not my only encounter with this gentleman. . . ."

The siege of St. Jean d'Acre, like that of Jaffa, was attended with horrible scenes. At the very first attack, Eugène was placed *hors de combat* for nineteen days by a splinter from a shell ; this same shell threw down a wall, part of which fell upon the young lieutenant and buried him in dust and rubbish ; he was eventually dug out from the *débris*, half suffocated. Plague was rife among besieged and besiegers. Many fierce contests took place without any important result. The French made repeated but fruitless efforts to take the town by storm ; three hundred heroes, who had won honour for the French colours during the first Italian campaign, swore to take the place or perish in the attempt : not one returned.

Commodore Sidney Smith, aided by Hassan Bey's troops, was able to repulse every onset ; General Bonaparte was obliged to abandon the siege. The number of plague-stricken soldiers was so great that no precautions could be taken against infection. Wounded men and plague-patients were herded together in the same tent. As the wells in the vicinity of St. Jean had been poisoned, when the wounded crept up in the hope of quenching their thirst they succumbed immediately. Eugène escaped plague owing to the fact that he always held a handkerchief steeped in vinegar before his face when obliged to walk over any dead bodies. A heartrending scene took place when General Bonaparte gave orders to his army to raise the siege and return to Cairo ; he did everything that man could do for the comfort and transport of the sick, nevertheless fifteen French soldiers, too ill to be moved, had to be left behind. We can imagine Eugène's sufferings on hearing the bitter reproaches addressed by the forsaken men to their General for whom they had given their lives. History does not record their ultimate fate : let us hope that death came to end their troubles.

Of Eugène's five horses, three were used to carry plague patients, while his two remaining mounts were ridden by two wounded soldiers.

Eugène now tells us how he captured an Arab tribe and a flock of camels :

"The night before reaching Cairo, General Bonaparte, having perceived a big caravan on the edge of the desert, ordered me to take twenty-five mounted men and reconnoitre. This caravan was composed of an Arab tribe of about two hundred armed men with four hundred camels and a flock of sheep. On our approach they began to fly, but I continued to pursue them far into the desert. However, our horses were so tired that we should not have been able to come up with them if I had not determined to choose five of my best mounted men, and to leave the rest behind with orders to follow us as quickly as possible. Having at last overtaken the Arabs, we rather imprudently charged right into their very midst, whereupon they discharged their guns at us ; but on the appearance of the rest of our little band they fled still farther into the desert, abandoning their flocks, which I immediately seized. I should not have known what to do with the animals if General Bonaparte, anxious at having lost sight of us, had not sent two or three pickets after us ; these men helped me to drive the whole flock back to Cairo."

Hitherto Eugène, with the exception of a sprained foot and the little misadventure under the walls of St. Jean d'Acre, had had scarcely any illness ; however, he was so imprudent while at Ramanieh as to partake too freely of the water-melons used by the French soldiers to allay their thirst, whereupon he fell ill and was obliged to go to the hospital. This inaction was intensely irksome to the young soldier, and he teased Larrey[1] until the latter allowed him, although still weak, to leave hospital and join the army outside Aboukir.

" I left at one o'clock in the morning," says he, " and I was lucky enough to come up with the army, which had arrived outside Aboukir July 24th, 1799. Here we found the enemy, numbering about 18,000 men, entrenched in front of the village. Although General Bonaparte could only muster 4300 men and less than 800 horses, he determined to open fire upon the enemy, which he did, and almost immediately dislodged them from their advanced post. Notwithstanding the fact that I was not an artillery officer, I was commissioned by the general to direct the two first cannons won from the Turks against the English boats which were on our left. I then observed that one of our bullets had fallen so close to a ship's boat that it had nearly been swamped. By a strange chance Commodore Sidney Smith was in this boat, as he himself told me fifteen years later."

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[1] *Larrey*, Dominique-Jean, baron (1766–1842) : called by the French army " the Soldiers' Providence," and by Napoleon " the virtuous Larrey," accompanied Napoleon on his campaigns in Italy, Egypt, Germany, Spain and Russia. He was wounded on several occasions while saving wounded soldiers under fire and was taken prisoner at Waterloo. His bravery and honesty secured for him the post of surgeon-in-chief to the royal guards during the Restoration. He deserves a special niche in the history of France for his devotion to his profession and his absolute fearlessness in the face of danger.

We now find in Eugène's memoirs an account of the circumstances which made his step-father determine to return to Paris as soon as he could possibly do so without imperilling his position.

" We had had no news from France for a long time, and I think I am right in saying that we had not seen any newspapers for eight months, with the exception of a few cuttings containing bad news purposely distributed by our enemies among our soldiers in order to dishearten them. General Bonaparte profited by our stay at Alexandria in order to try and learn what was going on in France. To obtain this result, he opened up negotiations with an English cruiser under the pretext of exchanging newspapers ; he managed to flatter the captain of the cruiser to such an extent that the fellow, unwilling to be behindhand in the matter of civility, sent him by the hand of his secretary a number of French newspapers. This was exactly what the General wanted ; his politeness had had the desired effect. I was with him while he read these papers in which he learnt of our disasters : the loss of Italy and the imminent peril with which France was then threatened. While reading this bad news, General Bonaparte frequently uttered such exclamations as : ' Oh ! the wretches, can it be true ? '—' Poor France ! what have they done ? '—and other phrases expressive of grief and indignation. He became more and more agitated, and, in his impatience, scattered the newspapers over the table ; some of them fell close to me. As he did not seem to object to my doing so, I ventured to glance through one or two He made me sit down, and we spent the rest of the night reading the newspapers, which numbered over one hundred Having finished them, he made me fasten them up in a bundle, told me to say nothing about what we had read, and then sent them back to the captain. Although he never took me into his confidence upon the subject, I am convinced that what he read that night made him determine to return to France."

After taking Aboukir, General Bonaparte returned to Cairo, where he made his preparations for a secret departure. He had his own reasons for not wishing his step-son to know that he really contemplated leaving Egypt, so he told him nothing beyond the fact that he was to hold himself in readiness to start for Upper Egypt at any moment. But when Eugène did receive orders to start, the place of his destination was Lower, not Upper Egypt.

They reached the coast after two days of incessant marching. Eugène says:

"We were much surprised; we did not know what to think of this sudden departure and mysterious march. The General, in order to put an end to the conjectures and remarks of his staff, announced that he had just received news of the approach of the enemy's fleet and that another attack was feared. When nearing Alexandria, I was sent to reconnoitre along the sea-coast in order to ascertain whether there were any signs of the enemy having landed lately. The General seemed rather nervous while questioning me on my return; however, his face cleared when I informed him that I had indeed seen two frigates but that I thought they were flying the French flag. He had good cause to be pleased, for his plans seemed likely to succeed; these two frigates were to take us back to France. He then informed me of this fact, adding: 'Eugène, you will soon see your mother again.' I did not experience all the pleasure I ought to have felt on hearing these words. We embarked that same night, and I remarked that my travelling-companions seemed equally depressed. This depression can only be explained by our mysterious departure, our regret at leaving our comrades, our fear of being captured by the English, and by the faint hope of ever seeing France again."

We notice one strange remark in the above extract from Eugène's memoirs: he says that he did not experience all the pleasure he ought to have felt on hearing that he was soon to see his mother again.

Can it be that, even in far-away Egypt, Eugène had heard of the renewal of his mother's intimacy with a certain Lieutenant Hippolyte Charles, a handsome young fop whom General Bonaparte had already been obliged to put in his proper place? While her husband and son were in Egypt, exposed to all sorts of dangers on land and on water, to plague and to the other numerous risks which every soldier has to face, Mme. Bonaparte had been amusing herself at her country-house, La Malmaison,[1] truly a *Malmaison* to her in after years, for in this lovely spot she was to learn the bitter truth of Dante's immortal verse:

> "Nessun maggior dolore,
> Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
> Nella miseria. . . ."

She hardly ever left the grounds of her property. The good folk of the neighbouring villages of Marly and Rueil, when walking along the high road outside the walls of La Malmaison, frequently caught glimpses of her strolling along under the beeches and chestnut trees which still flourish in that sweet spot, clad in a white dress with her head enveloped in a gauze veil, leaning on the arm of a young man whom the simple-minded creatures fondly believed to be her son. Had not General Junot[2] already been mistaken for Eugène when that brave fellow, in 1796, presented the flags won during the first Italian campaign to the Directoire on the occasion of a splendid fête at the Luxemburg? Kind friends had taken care to inform General Bonaparte that Mme. Bonaparte had forgotten the saying that Cæsar's wife should be above suspicion, and perchance Eugène had heard something of the reports which were poisoning his step-father's existence.

When near Tunis strange lights were sighted which were eventually proved to belong to some English vessels. After being becalmed for some days and suffering much anxiety as to whether they would escape the enemy or not, a storm arose and drove the two frigates upon which General Bonaparte and his staff were sailing towards Ajaccio, his native town, where they landed and where General Bonaparte received a most enthusiastic welcome. He was now able to obtain more definite news concerning affairs in France. Although the knowledge that an English squadron was cruising about between Toulon and Genoa was not calculated to reassure him, he determined, after spending two days at Ajaccio, to make for the former seaport. The coast of France had just been sighted when a vessel, evidently English, was seen bearing down upon the two frigates. General Bonaparte, convinced that his future career depended upon reaching France as soon as possible and that he would be ruined if he were taken prisoner at this most inopportune moment, assembled all his generals, his staff and the captains of the two vessels, and asked their opinion as to what he had better do. Captain Gantheaume and several of the officers said they thought it would be wiser to return to Ajaccio. But General Bonaparte, who was not the man to beat a retreat when there was the smallest loophole for escape or the slightest chance of success, declared his intention to risk capture and to continue on his voyage towards Toulon. The English fleet still seemed bearing down upon the two fugitive ships ; however, night soon fell and put an end to their anxiety by enabling them to get away from their pursuers.

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[1] Malmaison, *Mala Domus*, the house with a curse.

[2] *Junot*, duc d'Abrantès (1771–1813): a French general, Napoleon's aide-de-camp in Egypt; received the title of duke after the brilliant victory at Abrantès in Portugal.

At dawn on the morrow the French vessels, now followed by only one English frigate, sailed into the bay of Fréjus. A cutter was immediately sent ashore to inform the municipal authorities of that town that General Bonaparte had arrived.

" Hardly was this news known," says Eugène, " when the inhabitants jumped into all the boats they could muster and, heedless of all sanitary precautions, rowed out to meet us and escort us to land. Their enthusiasm and cries of joy were redoubled when they caught sight of General Bonaparte. ' Behold our liberator ! ' cried they. ' Heaven has sent him to help us ! ' We were deeply touched by this reception. We now learnt into what a state of despair France had fallen ; the sight of our General seemed to awaken hope and confidence in all hearts ; we were proud to serve him who was now returning to France in order to release our country from her bondage of misfortune."

The journey to Paris was a triumphant procession. At Lyons, where the young conqueror was welcomed with every sign of gratitude and affection, he, unable to curb his impatience to see for himself what was happening in Paris and at his own fireside, jumped into a post-chaise and made the rest of the journey alone except for the company of his step-son.

CHAPTER III

Eugène obtains pardon for his mother—The 18th *Brumaire*—Eugène enjoys practical jokes—His portrait—His step-father and his mother take up their abode at the Tuileries—He pays his second visit to Italy—Returns to Paris via Geneva—His first love-affair—He meets an old friend from Rome—Third visit to Italy—Eugène is given the rank of colonel—Murder of the duc d'Enghien.

MME. BONAPARTE had left La Malmaison and started for Lyons on learning that her husband had landed at Fréjus; but, instead of taking the route through the Bourbonnais which her husband had taken, she, thinking that he would choose his favourite route through Bourgogne, chose the latter and so missed him. This was a most unfortunate mistake, for it gave colour to the reports which had lately caused her husband so many hours of anguish. General Bonaparte drove up to his *hôtel* in the rue de la Victoire at six o'clock on the morning of October 16th, 1799. His mother and his brothers and sisters were there to welcome him, but the one person who should have been the first to greet him after an absence of nearly seventeen months was not there. And yet it was no fault of hers; she had acted in perfect good faith when she started for Lyons in the hope of forestalling her enemy Louis Bonaparte, who she knew was longing to make a quarrel between herself and her husband, and who now possessed sufficient proofs to develop that quarrel into something which she had already begun to dread—a divorce. On reaching Paris, whither she hurried back with all possible speed, but where she did not arrive until nearly forty-eight hours after the general's return, she saw by his face that he knew everything. No sooner were they alone together when he burst forth into the most bitter reproaches for her wicked, heartless conduct during his long absence in Egypt, where he had braved so many dangers in order to win fame and fortune for her, his Josephine—alas! so unworthy of his devotion.

After a brief but terrible interview, General Bonaparte rushed out of the room and locked himself into his own study.[1]

We can imagine the grief and disappointment of Eugène and Hortense (for Mme. Bonaparte, knowing how the general loved his step-children, had taken the precaution to fetch Hortense from her boarding-school at Saint Germain before starting for Lyons) at this longed-for home-coming. And what a home-coming it was! Their mother, in her horror at the consequences of her behaviour, had flung herself on the floor outside her husband's door, and there she lay sobbing, groaning, begging him in her soft, Creole voice to let her come in that "she might explain everything and clear herself from his family's wicked and utterly unfounded accusations." Her waiting-woman having suggested that she should send her children to intercede for her, she gladly clutched at this last straw and told them to endeavour to soften their step-father's heart. They obeyed. After knocking two or three times without obtaining any answer, Eugène whispered through the door: "Hortense and Eugène, your children whom you love so dearly, are here. Do not send our mother away! She will die if you do so! and then what shall we poor children do? The scaffold has already devoured our natural protector: must the injustice of mankind deprive us of the protector sent by Providence?"

At last he consented to open the door. They fell at his feet weeping and scarcely daring to look up into that cold, stern face. But although they had won the first victory, the worst had still to come. General Bonaparte harshly announced his intention of divorcing his erring spouse. However, he did not intend to let Eugène suffer for his mother's folly, and so he told him:

"As for you, you shall not pay for your mother's sins. You shall always be my son. I will keep you with me."

"No, General," replied Eugène, much to his step-father's surprise; "no, I must share my mother's cruel fate, and so I will bid you farewell."

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[1] See *The Wife of General Bonaparte*, by Joseph Turquan. (John Lane, 1911.)

With tears in his eyes, General Bonaparte opened his arms to his step-son and pressed him to his heart.

"Fetch your mother!" said he.

The battle was won; the conqueror had been conquered.

It is strange to think that General Bonaparte, the future Emperor who sacrificed thousands of precious human lives to his boundless ambition, should have been so easily moved by the sorrow of Eugène and Hortense. But did he not in after years love to surround himself with his nephews and nieces, into whose games he would enter as heartily as any of the young Bonapartes? And was he not the tenderest of fathers during the few short years Fate allowed him to play that part?

When M. Collot called on the morrow he found that the general was apparently reconciled to his wife; he expressed some astonishment at this sudden calm after the storm of the previous night.

"Ah! yes," said the general, "it is so. Now don't go and think that I've forgiven her. . . . That I will never do! . . . . I hoped that I was mistaken, but she has told me everything. . . . I refused to see her on my arrival! . . . And there was that great booby Joseph looking on all the time! . . . But what can you expect, Collot? As she was going downstairs crying, I saw Eugène and Hortense following her and sobbing bitterly. God did not give me a heart to see tears shed without feeling moved myself. Eugène was with me in Egypt; I have grown accustomed to consider him as my adopted son; he is so brave and such a good young fellow. . . . I must confess, Collot, that I was deeply moved; I could not withstand the sobs and tears of those two poor children. I said to myself: 'Is it right for them to suffer for their mother's fault?' I kept Eugène with me; Hortense followed her mother; I said nothing—what would you have had me say? . . . After all, every man has a weak spot in his heart."

On Collot assuring him that his step-children would reward him for his kindness, he replied:

"They ought to do so, Collot, they ought to do so, for it cost me something to forgive her."

Immediately after his arrival in Paris, General Bonaparte hastened to obtain interviews with the most influential members of the Directoire.

Everybody wanted to see the young conqueror, the hero of the hour. Not only were his *salons* in the *hôtel* in the rue de la Victoire crowded with visitors of all sorts and conditions, but the courtyard and even the streets adjoining were filled with inquisitive persons. Eugène says:

"I was too young at that time and too ignorant of public affairs to follow all the details of the circumstances which led to the Revolution of the 18th *Brumaire;* I was then, as I have been throughout my life, occupied with attending to my duty without meddling with affairs which did not concern me. During the first days of *Brumaire* General Bonaparte had frequent interviews with members of the government and of the army. I was so often employed to carry letters to and fro that I began to suspect that some important event was about to take place. An order which we received to hold our horses and fire-arms in readiness convinced me that I had guessed aright. One or two nights preceding the 18th *Brumaire* I was sent to General Moreau[1] and to M. Garat,[2] and on the morning of the 18th *Brumaire* General Bonaparte sent me to the *Conseil des Anciens*[3] in order to inform that body that he was coming to address it. I must confess that I performed this task with all the nervousness usually experienced by a young man when speaking in public for the first time. General Bonaparte soon appeared; after a long speech, in which he described France's unhappy condition and the inefficiency of the government, he pointed out the necessity of remedying this state of affairs, and concluded by proposing that the Directoire should be abolished and that the two *conseils* should adjourn to Saint-Cloud. This proposal was adopted by a great majority of the members of the *Conseil des Anciens*, nearly all of whom seemed to think like the general. He was given command of the troops, with full power to carry out the step which had just been decreed. On leaving the *salle*, the General harangued his men and told them that they were the sole support of the fatherland ; the soldiers received this appeal with much enthusiasm. A detachment, under the command of General Moreau, had already been sent to the palace of the Luxemburg in order to take possession of that building and eject the members of the Directoire."

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[1] *Moreau*, Victor (1763–1813): a general in the Republican Army, conspired with Pichegru and Georges Cadoudal against the life of the First Consul, for which offence he was banished from France. He was killed outside Dresden while fighting against his country.

[2] *Garat*, Joseph (1749–1833): a well-known French writer, succeeded Danton as Minister of Justice in 1792; he it was who was chosen to announce to Louis XVI the fate which was in store for him.

[3] *Conseil des Anciens* and *Conseil des Cinq Cents*, assemblies instituted in France by the Constitution of the *an III* (September 23rd, 1795), in order to form the legislative power.

It does not seem very certain whether General Bonaparte took his step-son into his confidence concerning what he was now going to do or not. Probably he did not do so, as he refrained from doing on other occasions, knowing that Eugène would do whatever he was told to do, blindly, without questioning the why or the wherefore. The comte de Lavalette says in his *Mémoires et Souvenirs* :

" We were so ignorant on the 17th *Brumaire* of what was to happen on the morrow, that I and Eugène spent the evening at a ball where he remained until early morning ; I left at midnight because I had to resume my duties at that hour."

M. Gohier, one of General Bonaparte's fair-weather friends, says that Mme. Bonaparte, in order to prevent the president of the Directoire[1] having any suspicion of what was about to take place, and fearing the opposition of that influential man, sent Eugène on the evening of the 17th *Brumaire* with an invitation for M. and Mme. Gohier to breakfast with her on the morrow, which invitation they declined and begged the general and his wife to come and breakfast with them instead.

We will now hear what Constant, who was Eugène's valet for the space of one month before he entered the service of the general, has to say on the matter :

" A few days prior to the 18th *Brumaire*, M. Eugène ordered me to see about a breakfast-party which he was to give on that day to his friends. The guests, all of whom were military men, were more numerous than usual. This bachelors' feast was enlivened by an officer who began to caricature the manner and walk of the members of the Directoire and of some of their confederates. He imitated Barras by draping himself with the table-cloth in Greek fashion; he took off his black neckcloth, pulled down his shirt-collar, and swaggered up and down the room with his left arm leaning on the shoulder of the youngest of his comrades, while with his right hand he stroked his chin. Everybody recognized the original and the laughter was loud and long. He then imitated the *abbé* Sieyès[1] by fastening a huge paper frill into his neckcloth and by pulling his face out until it looked twice its proper length. He now vaulted on his chair and raced round and round the room several times, finishing with a grand crash, as if his horse had thrown him. In order to understand this pantomime, my readers must know that the *abbé* Sieyès, for some time past, had been taking riding-lessons in the gardens of the Luxemburg, to the great delight of the promenaders, who assembled in crowds to laugh at the rider's stiff and unnatural way of bestriding his steed.

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[1] *Gohier*, Jerôme (1746-1830): Minister of Justice, president of the Directoire.

" When the breakfast-party was over, M. Eugène went to attend General Bonaparte, to whom he was aide-de-camp, while his guests returned to their different headquarters. I followed them, for, from what I had heard said in my young master's presence, I was convinced that something serious and interesting was about to take place. M. Eugène had told his comrades to meet him at the Pont-Tournant; I also went there and found a number of officers, mounted and wearing their uniforms, all ready to follow General Bonaparte to Saint-Cloud.

" The commanders of the different regiments had been requested by General Bonaparte to invite their officers to breakfast, and they had imitated my young master's example. However, all the officers were not in the secret; and even General Murat, who burst into the *salle* of the *Cinq Cents* at the head of his grenadiers, thought that General Bonaparte only wished to request permission to be allowed, notwithstanding his youth, to become a member of the Directoire.

" I have since been informed by somebody who knew all about the matter that just as General Jubé, one of General

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[1] *Sieyès*, Abbé (1748–1836): celebrated statesman and one of the three consuls after the 18th *Brumaire*.

Bonaparte's most devoted admirers, was mustering the *Directeurs'* guard in the courtyard of the Luxemburg, that excellent M. Gohier, president of the Directoire, put his head out of a window and cried to Jubé :

" 'Citizen general, what are you doing down there ?'

" 'Citizen president,' answered Jubé, 'you can see for yourself : I am mustering the guard.'

" 'Oh ! yes, I can see perfectly well, citizen general ; but why do you do so ?'

" 'Because I am going to inspect the troops, citizen president, and because I am to carry out some very important manœuvres. Forward, march !'

"The citizen general then went off at the head of his troops in order to rejoin General Bonaparte at Saint-Cloud, while the citizen president grumbled at the fact that the breakfast to which he had invited General Bonaparte that very morning was getting cold."

With the help of Sieyès, Roger-Ducos, his brother Lucien (president of the *Conseil des Cinq Cents*) and many officers, General Bonaparte overthrew the Directoire by the *Coup d'Etat* of the 18th *Brumaire, an VIII.* By the constitution of the *an VIII*, which was drawn up by Sieyès and "modified" by the general to suit his own plans, the latter received the title of First Consul for the period of ten years—the first step towards the throne.

"On the morrow of the 18th *Brumaire*," says Eugène, "the troops marched to Saint-Cloud, where the two *conseils* were assembled. All that happened there is well known. . . . At last they came to inform General Bonaparte that matters had reached to such a point that his presence was indispensable. He immediately went to address the *Conseil des Cinq Cents.* While crossing the courtyard he was surrounded by groups of very excited soldiers. I got separated from him by some grenadiers pressing round him, so I did not obtain a good view of the effect produced by his appearance in the *salle.* The only thing which struck me was the cry of 'Throw him out ! Down with him ! General Bonaparte must be outlawed !' I myself did not see any daggers pointed at him, nevertheless I cannot affirm that the incident did not occur.

"General Bonaparte left the *salle* in a state of great excitement ; his features were distorted. The critical position in which he found himself at that moment explains this condition : he either had to succeed or else perish ignominiously on the scaffold. On re-entering the courtyard he again harangued the troops with great vehemence and gave them orders to clear the hall—which they did. The government of the provisional consuls was then established by the *Conseil des Anciens* and accepted by the minority of the *Conseil des Cinq Cents* who had remained at Saint-Cloud. The other members had fled through the gardens ; the ground was strewn with the togas, caps and scarves which they had lost in their flight.

" I was sent, towards midnight, to reassure my mother and to give her an account of the day's events.

" The new government having been proclaimed, we now took up our abode at the Petit Luxembourg."

A change was about to come in Eugène's life, a very unwelcome change to a young man anxious to win laurels for himself, for he now had to spend the greater part of his time in the ante-rooms of the palace of the Petit Luxembourg with gentlemen-ushers and the petitioners and visitors of all sorts who desired to obtain audiences of the First Consul as his fellow-prisoners. It is said that no man is a hero to his valet, and yet Constant draws a most flattering portrait of Eugène as he was at that time.

" I do not think," says he, " that a more polite, more thoughtful and more refined young man than Eugène ever existed. . . . I was delighted to be his valet ; I know not why, but the idea was peculiarly pleasant to me. . . . *General Bonaparte never ceased to love M. Eugène as if he were his own son.* Eugène had many sterling good qualities. His features were not handsome and yet his expression was very pleasing. He had a good figure, although he did not hold himself well, owing to an ugly trick he had of twisting his body about as he walked. He was about five feet three or four inches tall. He was kind-hearted, cheerful, amiable, very witty and generous ; we can safely say that he bore his character in his face. How many kind deeds did he not accomplish during his life, and especially at a time when he was very badly off for money ? I well remember that, although he always scrupulously fulfilled his duty towards his mother and his step-father, he was much given to the pleasures natural at his age and in his position. One of his favourite pastimes was to give breakfast-parties to his friends, which he did very often, and which I myself keenly enjoyed on account of the comical scenes witnessed by me. Besides the young military men belonging to Bonaparte's staff—his most assiduous guests—he often invited the ventriloquist Thiémet, the actors Dugazon, Dazincourt and Michau from the *Théâtre Français*, and other persons whose names I now forget. As my readers can easily imagine, these breakfast-parties were very lively; the young officers, in especial, who, like Eugène, had just returned from the Egyptian campaign, asked nothing better than to be allowed to make up for lost time. Ventriloquy was the fashion in Paris at that time; there was usually a ventriloquist at every party. Thiémet was considered one of the best. I remember how one day at one of Eugène's breakfast-parties Thiémet called by their names several persons then present, imitating the voices of their servants as if the latter were outside; he himself sat quietly in his place, eating and drinking, two feats at which he excelled. The officers, on hearing their names called, went downstairs, but of course found nobody; then Thiémet, with feigned civility, also went downstairs, on pretext of helping them search, and so prolonged the joke by imitating some familiar street-cry. Most of the victims laughed heartily at the hoax; one gentleman, however, less good-natured than his fellow-guests, took the joke in a very different spirit and became quite angry until he heard that Eugène was the instigator.

"I remember another amusing scene in which the principal rôles were filled by this same Thiémet and by the actor Dugazon. Eugène had invited several strangers; the rôles had been distributed and learnt beforehand, and the two victims chosen. When all the guests were seated at table, Dugazon, imitating a man afflicted with an impediment in his speech, addressed Thiémet, who likewise pretended to be similarly affected; they accused each other of making fun of each other and nearly became inarticulate in their feigned indignation. Thiémet, pretending to be deaf as well as afflicted with an impediment in his speech, said, sticking his ear-trumpet into his neighbour's face: ' Wha—wha—what's the fellow talking about ? ' ' Nothing,' replied his neighbour, hoping to prevent a dispute. ' Oh ! bu—bu—but he's mocking me ! ' The quarrel became more heated ; the two stammerers each seized a water-bottle, which they were proceeding to pitch at each other when their neighbours emptied the contents over the antagonists. The stammerers continued to scream as only deaf men can scream, until the last drop of water had fallen. I well remember that Eugène, the author of this practical joke, laughed until the tears ran down his face. The two antagonists were then wiped down. . . . Whenever Eugène had indulged in a hoax of this sort, he never omitted to tell his mother all about it ; he even told his step-father sometimes, for the latter keenly enjoyed hearing of his little jokes. . . ."

Eugène's practical jokes were not always in very good taste, perhaps ; but we must remember that he had had a strange education, and that, with the exception of the maxims of honour and courage learnt at his father's knee, poor Eugène had seen but few examples of what a gentleman should be. Mme. de Beauharnais was not the sort of person to influence anybody for good, much less her children, whom she seems to have found in the way on more than one occasion during her brief widowhood. Her lack of truthfulness—did not her own daughter say that she could not believe her mother ?—her incapacity to judge between right and wrong, ought to have had a very bad effect upon her son ; luckily they did not. The question of heredity is often a complicated one : from whom did Eugène inherit those good qualities for which his step-father had learnt to prize him and which caused the fallen Emperor to say, when expiating his criminal indifference to the value of human life : " Eugène has never caused me a moment's sorrow " ?

Perhaps those few years spent with his father counted for something in his character, but we are more inclined to think that Eugène was the maker of his own fortunes.

Mme. de Rémusat said of him :

" Eugène's expression is not wanting in charm. He has an elegant figure ; he inherits his agility from his father, a member of the old nobility. Simplicity and good nature are united to these advantages; he is neither vain nor presumptuous, and he is truthful without indiscretion; he knows how to keep silent when necessary; he is neither naturally witty nor imaginative, and he is not particularly affectionate. He was always obedient to his step-father; and although he had no illusions concerning that person's character, he never swerved in his fidelity to him, though he often had to suffer for it. He was never heard to give way to resentment."

One of General Bonaparte's first acts on taking up his abode at the Petit Luxembourg was to provide himself with a consular guard, which body Eugène begged to be allowed to join. Although Eugène, as we have already seen, liked to amuse himself at times—after all, he was still so young, only twenty years of age—he could not bear to remain inactive. But Eugène was not the only member of the consular guard who knew the truth of the saying: "All play and no work makes Jack a dull boy."

Mme. d'Abrantès, that wonderful lady whose eighteen volumes of memoirs contain all the tittle-tattle of the consular days, the Empire and the Restoration, says of Eugène and of his friend, Lannes:[1]

"Lannes was a colonel in the *régiment des guides*, that is to say in the consular guard, together with Eugène Beauharnais; they lodged in the same house, and it was said that they were both equally fond of the pleasures to which young men are usually addicted. . . .

"Eugène was still scarcely more than a boy, but he already showed signs of what he became later: a charming, amiable and handsome youth, with the exception of his teeth, which, like those of his mother, were dreadful. His whole person presented a very pleasing and elegant appearance, and he possessed one great charm in that his manners were easy and excessively refined. Although he was as fond of laughter as a child, he never smiled at anything unseemly. He was amiable, gracious, polite without being obsequious, and very fond of banter without being impertinent—a talent seldom seen nowadays, let me add.

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[1] *Lannes*, duc de Montebello (1769–1809): marshal of France and one of her bravest soldiers; he was killed at the Battle of Essling.

He was a very good actor, sang charmingly, danced as well as his father had danced, and was altogether a very nice young man. He quite won my mother's heart, but then I think he wished to please her; he certainly succeeded, to perfection."

The palace of the Petit Luxembourg soon became too small for the eagle whose wings were now growing rapidly, who was so soon to fly over the whole Continent; before many weeks had elapsed, the First Consul had planned that triumphant procession to the Tuileries, the now tenantless abode of the dynasty to which he was so anxious to succeed. But first of all he determined to conclude the marriage of his sister Caroline, whose hand was being sought by two of his bravest generals, Lannes and Murat.[1] Before making his decision, he called a family council, and Eugène and Hortense were asked, among others, to express their opinion concerning the matter. Murat, backed by Mme. Bonaparte and Eugène and Hortense, who followed her suit in this as in many other matters, won the day.

And now, in February, 1800, the First Consul, after reviewing his troops in the cour du Carrousel, when Eugène, as commander of the *régiment des guides*, was particularly admired for his martial bearing, entered the Tuileries as the new lord and master. Mme. Bonaparte was anxious to profit by her splendid position as wife of the First Consul. Her receptions were modelled upon those given at the Court of Louis XVI, to which, it is true, she had never been invited, but of which she had heard enough to wish to imitate as closely as possible—and she succeeded, thanks to the presence and goodwill of those survivors of the Revolution who, as *émigrés*, beaten but in no wise subdued, were returning in shoals to their old haunts.

Mme. d'Abrantès gives us a glimpse of one of those receptions which often ended in an impromptu ball, when she would dance that new-fangled waltz which was beginning to be all the rage (notwithstanding the fact that some strait-laced people called it improper and disgusting) with her hostess's son :

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[1] *Murat*, Joachim: a French general who, for his valuable help during the stormy days of the 13th *Vendémiaire* and the 18th *Brumaire*, received the hand of Caroline, the First Consul's sister, in marriage. He was made marshal of France in 1804, king of Naples in 1808, and contrived to keep his throne in 1814. Having repented of his treacherous conduct towards his brother-in-law, he joined the latter on his return from Elba; he was defeated by the Austrians at Tolentino, on which occasion he lost both army and throne. He then took refuge in Corsica. While endeavouring to recover his throne, he was captured, and condemned to be shot. He died very bravely (October 13th, 1815).

" At that moment the folding-doors of Mme. Bonaparte's apartment were thrown open and somebody ran quickly downstairs : it was Eugène de Beauharnais. His mother had sent him to fetch me when she heard my carriage enter the courtyard. . . . M. de Beauharnais gave me his hand and then we entered the *salon* decorated with yellow hangings which we, the women of the old days, knew so well. . . . The room was so dark, owing to the fact that it was only lighted by two candelabras of wax candles placed on the mantelpiece, and I was so overcome with shyness on entering this huge room, that I could see nothing. But I soon recovered my composure, thanks to Eugène de Beauharnais, who whispered a few kind words of encouragement and squeezed my arm in his, for it was not the fashion in those days for gentlemen to lead their partners by the hand. ' Don't be afraid,' said he, ' my mother and my sister are so kind ! ' These words quite reassured me."

Mme. d'Abrantès then goes on to tell us of the tender affection which existed between Eugène and his sister, an affection which neither time, nor absence, nor good nor bad fortune could lessen. It was during the winter of 1799–1800 that Hortense painted a portrait of that beloved brother of whom she said in after years that " Eugène was the only person who made life worth living." This portrait was destroyed in a fire, first thought to be the work of an incendiary, but afterwards proved to be caused by a defective flue in the heating apparatus at the Tuileries.

In the month of May, 1800, Eugène received orders from his step-father, who had now returned to his proper sphere, the *armeé d'Italie*, to join that army and to cross the Alps. The route chosen was by the Mont Saint-Bernard. As was his custom to do at times, the First Consul travelled post, which obliged his troops to make long and very fatiguing marches in order to keep up with him. Several soldiers, although very tired, determined, on reaching the summit of the pass, to slide down into Italy ; whereupon Eugène, always ready to enter into any fun, joined his comrades in arms and enjoyed the swift rush through the mountain air as much as the youngest of them.

Eugène took part in the battles of Buffalora and Marengo, when Murat distinguished himself by his bravery. It was at Marengo that Eugène was fortunate enough to wrest a few words of praise from his step-father, one of the most difficult men to please that ever existed. But then the First Consul had served in the army of the Republic, that army which owed much of its success to the fact that the guillotine was the reward of those who were backward in attacking the enemy or unsuccessful in their attacks. Eugène helped, by his repeated charges, to drive the Italian troops back into Milan. He narrowly escaped being wounded, for his shabrack was cut in several places.

As a reward for his bravery, Eugène was made commander of his squadron on the battle-field. Speaking of this battle, he says:

"My little band of soldiers had suffered rather severely, for of the one hundred and fifteen horses I possessed in the morning only forty-five remained to me by nightfall; it is true that a picket of fifteen light horse had remained close to the First Consul, and that many of my men returned later in the evening either slightly wounded or having lost their mounts."

Eugène was not only brave, but, what is better, he was merciful. During a charge made by the enemy, one of their number fell wounded from his horse just in front of Eugène's men who were galloping towards him; the unfortunate man thought his last hour had come and held out his hands imploringly towards Eugène, who perceived him lying upon the battle-field; whereupon the command, "Open ranks!" rang out short and sharp on the evening air, and his soldiers, with clinking lance and clashing hoof, parted and rushed by, leaving the wounded trooper lying on the ground where he had fallen.

To Eugène was now confided a very pleasant task—that of carrying the flags won at Marengo to Paris, where they were to be hung up in the chapel of the Invalides, side by side with those other glorious rags which some have held dearer than life. He chose the Petit Saint-Bernard route, as he wished to pass through Geneva, where certain necessary repairs to armour and harness had to be attended to. While in that town a banquet was given in his honour. As Mme. de Staël[1] was the most important personage in Geneva at that time, she was invited to preside; she was in her element at such times, and, as usual, she had some verses all ready for the occasion in which she sang the praises of the French army and its chief, whose favour she was now extremely anxious to obtain. On taking their places, each guest found under his plate a miniature laurel-wreath with appropriate verses from the pen of this fountain of tedious eloquence.

Eugène reached Paris on July 14th; he bore his precious burden of flags to the Invalides and then proceeded with his troops to the Champ de Mars, where the National Fête was being celebrated; perhaps he was reminded on this day of a visit which he had once paid with his father, soon after the baptism of the Champ de Mars. Eugène speaks of this day as one of the happiest days in his life; at the sight of the brave soldiers with their haggard, sunburnt faces, still wearing their blood-stained, ragged uniforms, and covered with sweat and dust, the populace roared, howled, shrieked its enthusiasm for the heroes of Marengo. And Eugène came in for his share of glory. Had not his step-father, whose praise he valued more than anything on earth, written to his mother on the night after that battle:

"Madame, your son is making rapid strides on the road to immortality. He has covered himself with glory in all the battles in Italy; he will become one of the greatest soldiers in Europe."

What greater praise or reward could he have?

The next few months were spent by Eugène either in Paris or at La Malmaison, where the Bonapartes and the Beauharnais led as peaceful a life as it was in their nature to do. Constant paints a pleasant picture of those days:

"General Bonaparte was very fond of playing at prisoners' base with his officers. In this game the fastest runners were M. Eugène, M. Isabey[2] and Mlle. Hortense. . . . Little plays were often acted at La Malmaison ; the troupe consisted of MM. Eugène, Jérôme (Bonaparte), Lauriston and Mme. Caroline Murat, Mlle. Hortense and the Mlles. Auguié. I once saw *Les Fausses Consultations* played by them. Mlle. Hortense and M. Eugène acted splendidly, and I can still remember that Mlle. Hortense, who, as 'Mme. Leblanc,' had to play the part of an old lady, looked prettier than ever. M. Eugène took the part of 'M. Lenoir,' and M. Lauriston that of the 'Charlatan.'"

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[1] *Mme. de Staël* (1766–1817): baronne de Staël-Holstein, the queen of blue stockings.

[2] *Isabey*, Jean-Baptiste (1767–1855): a celebrated French painter who excelled in the art of miniature-painting.

During one of these pleasant sojourns at La Malmaison the celebrated miniature-painter Isabey, who was as fond of practical jokes as Eugène, made a terrible mistake and nearly got himself into the First Consul's black books. One evening Isabey was sauntering along a dark corridor when he caught sight of his friend Eugène—as he thought—standing with his back towards him. Now Isabey, who was very agile, was particularly fond of playing leap-frog. Creeping softly up behind the supposed Eugène, he gave one spring and landed upon the shoulders of the person whom he least expected to find in the corridor. The First Consul, for it was he, much disgusted at this unheard-of familiarity, flung his strange burden on the floor, stamped his foot and said in his most severe voice :

"What is the meaning of this folly ?"

"I thought it was Eugène," stammered the unhappy artist, nearly speechless in his confusion and horror at this veritable *faux-pas*.

"Well, and supposing it *had* been Eugène," retorted the First Consul, "does that fact excuse you for trying to break his neck ?"

And he walked off with a frown of displeasure on his pale, thin face.

The First Consul cannot have been an easy person to live with ; he allowed no joking in his immediate *entourage*, although he liked a good story and would often ask his step-son to tell him how he had been amusing himself with his companions. He also hated spending much time over his meals ; indeed, fifteen minutes were considered plenty of time in which to eat the most elaborate dinner. But this is not to be wondered at ; a man who had so many things to attend to, so many questions to decide, who, knowing the truth of the adage, wished to do everything himself, who arranged everything—even such unimportant matters as to what his wife should or should not wear—could not spare time to sit through long meals. Eugène was young in those days, the palmy days of the Consulate, Napoleon's *Blütezeit ;* he was blessed with a healthy appetite, so he took care to have a good meal before dining with his step-father, as he frequently did. For some time General Bonaparte did not remark the smallness of his step-son's appetite. At last, one day the First Consul asked Eugène to dine alone with him ; hardly had five minutes elapsed when the First Consul, having swallowed some soup and a few mouthfuls of meat, flung his napkin on the table and pushed his chair back preparatory to leaving the room. On noticing that Eugène had imitated his example, he said :

" Don't hurry ; you haven't had time to eat your dinner."

" Excuse me, I have had plenty," replied his step-son.

" Are you not hungry to-day ? " asked the First Consul, remembering Eugène's excellent appetite in Egypt and in Italy.

" I dined before I came here," said Eugène.

" Oh ! then that alters the case. Come along with me."

It was about this time that Eugène had his first love-affair. Mlle. Chameroi, the celebrated actress who died young and whose remains were denied admittance to the church of Saint-Roch, was the heroine of an adventure which luckily developed into nothing more serious than a passing flirtation between an ambitious woman and a rather sentimental and very inexperienced young man going through the throes of calf-love.

Many conspiracies had lately been made to assassinate the First Consul. It was during the autumn of 1800 that Eugène assisted at the arrest of two conspirators. We quote from his memoirs :

" One day after dining with Bessières[1] I went with him to attend the First Consul, who was going to the Opera that evening. When we arrived I found that my mother had left the drawing-room in order to dress. The First Consul came up to us and, with a smile on his face, said to us in the calmest manner possible :

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[1] *Bessières,* Jean Baptiste (1768–1813) : began life as a member of the constitutional guard of Louis XVI, served under Bonaparte during the Egyptian and Italian campaigns, and helped to make the victory of Marengo more complete ; took part in the battles of Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, Friedland ; went to Spain in 1808 and there won for himself the title of duc d'Istrie. He was killed during a skirmish which preceded the Battle of Lutzen.

" ' Well, have you heard that they intend to assassinate me at the Opera to-night ? '

" We both exclaimed with horror, and expressed our astonishment that he still persisted in going to the Opera ; but he told us not to be alarmed, and assured us that the police had taken measures to prevent any attempt upon his life ; he then told Bessières to do what he considered necessary for his safety. Bessières, who commanded the cavalry regiment of the consular guard, ordered me to go to the Opera-house with a picket of light infantry and to take proper precautions that all passed off quietly. On reaching that building, I ordered half my men to hold themselves in readiness, while I made the others accompany me. I then entered the house, preceding the First Consul by about fifty paces, being myself preceded by my men, so that the crowd both inside and outside the Opera-house might think that I was the First Consul. I ordered my men to halt and to draw up in two lines ; I myself stood on one side while the First Consul quietly passed between the double line of soldiers and entered his box. At that very moment the conspirators, Arena, a native of Corsica, and Ceracchi, a Roman, were arrested in another part of the house ; pistols and daggers were found upon their persons. They were tried, condemned and executed " (January 30th, 1801.)

It may be remembered that Eugène had already had dealings with Ceracchi while in Rome when that individual took refuge in the French Embassy from the Papal guards.

Matters in Italy were still very unsettled ; war seemed likely to break out again at any moment. For the third time our hero received orders to start for that country, which he did in December, 1800 ; but he never got as far as Italy, for, on reaching Saint Jean de Maurienne, he was told to go no further. " Here," says he, " I spent the winter and carnival-time very sadly."

While waiting for further orders, Eugène learnt of another plot against the life of the First Consul, that of the infernal machine of the 3rd *nivôse, an IX*, which so nearly cut short the embryo Emperor's career. This infernal machine, which exploded in the rue Nicaise, Paris, only a few minutes after the First Consul had driven by, consisted of a cask filled with nails, scraps of old iron and gunpowder. Forty-six houses were damaged, eight persons killed and eighteen badly injured by this explosion. For this attempt upon his life, the First Consul, under the impression that the plot was the work of the Republican party, had one hundred and thirty-three persons deported without a trial. It was afterwards proved that the Royalists were responsible for the whole affair.

Eugène soon after received orders to return to Paris, whither he was heartily glad to wend his way.

The next few months passed for Eugène without any particular event. The treaty of Lunéville, concluded in 1801, was followed by that of Amiens in 1802, when the First Consul was made consul for life—the second step towards the throne and the absolute power which he was striving every nerve to obtain. The year 1801 also saw peace concluded with Pius VII,[1] which may be termed the third step towards the goal of his ambition. In 1802 Eugène was raised to the rank of colonel, a step which did not meet with the approval of many of his brother officers. His pleasure at this promotion was somewhat spoilt by one of those blunt remarks for which General Bonaparte was rightly dreaded, uttered in the presence of several generals :

" You will never be anything but a colonel, Eugène. You have not got the stuff in you to make a general."

Nevertheless Eugène, on the occasion of some important military manœuvres which he helped to carry out most successfully outside Mayence in the presence of a number of German princelings and generals, was made brigadier-general.

In this same year Eugène's sister, Hortense, was married, much against her will, to Louis Bonaparte—an unhappy marriage if there ever was one—while France was invaded by that match-making lady, Sarah, duchess of Gordon, who, having got four of her daughters off her hands, came to see what titled foreigner, with or without a fortune, she could pick up for her youngest girl, Georgiana. She chose

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[1] *Pius VII* (1800–23) : signed the famous *concordat*, and came to Paris to anoint Napoleon Emperor of the French.

Eugène de Beauharnais, whom, as step-son to the First Consul and a member of the *petite noblesse* of France, she considered a sufficiently brilliant *parti* for a fifth daughter. Now although she was ready to accept Eugène as her son-in-law, the First Consul had other views, and was determined not to accept her daughter as his step-son's wife. He had already begun to dream those fatal dreams of royal alliances for his family; so Lady Georgiana had to return to her native land without a husband; however, as she married the duke of Bedford[1] in the following year, we may be allowed to suppose that she shed no tears over her mother's disappointment.

Eugène was meanwhile engaged in his most serious love-affair, a flirtation with no less an experienced person than Mme. Récamier. It was an easy matter for this woman of many conquests to make poor Eugène believe that she had met her master. She drew him on and on until he actually had the audacity to take a ring from her beautiful hand as a souvenir. But *souvent femme varie.* Mme. Récamier had allowed him to take this pledge of her friendship for him; so he was much astonished when he received a letter from her telling him to return the ring. Well might he have written with that ring the famous distich of François I, whose name he mentioned in his written prayer to be allowed to keep the precious souvenir, a prayer which shows how she had deceived him:

"I have been cruelly mistaken," wrote he; "I may be allowed to complain; may my complaint be heard by you! Be so kind as to soften the lot of him who is so sincerely devoted to you."

But Mme. Récamier's heart was not likely to be touched by such a request.

It was probably during the following year (1803), while the First Consul and his wife were at Saint-Cloud, that Archambault de Périgord, Talleyrand's[2] brother, refused to give his daughter in marriage to Eugène. It is more than probable that this project was the joint composition of Mme. Bonaparte and Talleyrand, both of whom were much given to "arranging" marriages. Archambault de Périgord had been exiled for having uttered some rather too plain-spoken remarks concerning the First Consul and other less influential persons; his refusal to marry his daughter to Eugène and his conduct in choosing as her husband comte Juste de Noailles gave great offence. We can easily imagine with what disgust Talleyrand heard of this decision; he and Mme. Bonaparte were able to sympathize with each other in this matter, for the erstwhile Bishop of Autun was astute enough to see what was coming, and he wished to have a niece (if no nearer relative) on the spot to share the good fortunes of the Beauharnais, and perhaps throw a few crumbs of the cake to the kind uncle who had placed it within her reach.

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[1] *John, sixth Duke of Bedford*: married as his first wife, in 1786, Georgina Elizabeth, second daughter of George, fourth Viscount Torrington; she died in 1801, leaving three sons. In 1803 he married Georgiana, fifth daughter of Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon; she died at Nice in February, 1853, leaving seven sons and three daughters.

[2] *Talleyrand-Périgord* (1754–1838): revolutionist, bishop of Autun, minister and traitor to his Emperor.

We do not know Eugène's opinion upon the matter; but we can be sure that the young soldier, whose time was nearly wholly taken up by his military duties in those days, was not particularly anxious to become related by marriage to the prince of intrigue. The future held better things in store for him, as we shall see.

Mme. de Rémusat assures us that Eugène, who had remained "a frank, honest, lively, open-hearted creature, was absolutely devoid of all ambition, and refused to have anything to do with intrigues or intriguers, did his duty in that walk of life in which his step-father had placed him, disarmed calumny—which was powerless to sully his fair name—and never meddled with anything which went on at the Tuileries."

The month of March, 1804, saw the discovery of another plot, that of Pichegru[1] and Cadoudal,[2] to get rid of the First Consul, whose foot was now firmly placed on the steps of the throne. Eugène was ordered to keep the gates of Paris with his regiment and to guard the outer *boulevards;* for three or four days Eugène and his men were on duty day and night, and, thanks to his vigilance, not a single conspirator escaped from Paris. General Moreau, Pichegru, Cadoudal, MM. de Polignac,[1] de Rivière and d'Hozier were arrested and tried. After the trial, which took place in the following June, the relatives of the condemned men flocked to Saint-Cloud with a petition for mercy and Mme. Bonaparte, whose Royalist tendencies were an open secret, was besought to intercede for the prisoners, which she did most successfully.

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[1] *Pichegru:* a French general, commanded the *armées de la Moselle* and *du Rhin;* conquered Holland in 1795, then turned traitor to the Directoire and was exiled from France (1798); he returned in 1804 with Georges Cadoudal, was captured and imprisoned; he committed suicide while in prison.

[2] *Cadoudal,* Georges: plotted against Bonaparte and perished on the scaffold in 1804.

The arrest, trial and murder of the duc d'Enghien[2] followed with such fearful rapidity that the friends of Napoleon's first and most innocent victim were unable to do anything to rescue him. We can only say in excuse of the First Consul's severity that he honestly believed that the Fouché[3] and Talleyrand done everything they could to duc d'Enghien had been in league with Cadoudal—had not make him believe this report, the truth of which has never been proved?—but does this fact excuse the inhuman treatment to which the young man was subjected? Sentence of death was passed when he was arrested; and his grave in the moat of Vincennes was dug before his judges assembled to hold that mock trial. Even the last request of the last of the Condés, a harmless wish that he might be allowed to see a priest before being led out to execution, was denied.

Let us now hear what Eugène has to say about this crime, perhaps the first step on the downward path to Saint Helena.

"As for the unfortunate affair of the duc d'Enghien, without entering into the question of politics, by which the deplorable deed alone can be explained, I will content myself with saying that, on reaching La Malmaison on the morrow, I learnt of the arrest, trial and execution of that prince. My mother was dissolved in tears, and reproached the First Consul most bitterly; he listened in silence. She told him that he would never be able to wash his hands of this atrocious crime, that he had yielded to the perfidious advice of his enemies, who were delighted to be able to stain the history of his life with this horrible page. The First Consul withdrew to his study, and Caulaincourt[1] arrived from Strasburg shortly after. My mother's grief surprised him; she hastened to tell him the cause. At the fatal news, Caulaincourt struck his forehead and tore his hair, crying: 'Ah! why was I mixed up in this tragic affair?'

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[1] *Polignac*, Armand, comte de (1771–1847): emigrated to Russia, returned to Paris in 1803, was implicated in the Pichegru-Cadoudal conspiracy, arrested, condemned to death, and saved, thanks to Josephine's intervention. When imprisoned at Ham, in 1813, he managed to escape, and in the following year was made aide-de-camp to the comte d'Artois, with whom he returned to France for the second time. He was elected as a deputy in 1815, and made *pair de France* in 1817; he retired from political life in 1830.

[2] *d'Enghien*, Louis Antoine Henri de Bourbon-Condé, duc (1772–1804): this prince emigrated and, in 1792, took up arms against the French Republic; when living in retirement at Ettenheim, near Baden, he was arrested, brought to Vincennes, judged by court-martial and condemned to death as a conspirator.

[3] *Fouché*, Joseph (1753–1820), duc d'Otrante by the will of Napoleon, was made Minister of Police in 1798, exiled by the Restoration; he died at Trieste.

"Twenty years have elapsed since that event, but I still remember that several persons who to-day try to make out that they had no share in the matter then boasted of the part they had played—as if they had done a very fine thing—and highly approved of the whole affair. As for me, I was deeply grieved on account of my respect and affection for the First Consul; it seemed to me as if this deed had tarnished his fame. My mother told me a few days later that she had been lucky enough to be able to send the lady to whom the prince was attached his dog and some objects which had once belonged to him."

The lady mentioned by Eugène was the princesse Charlotte de Rohan-Rochefort, the duke's cousin, and the story of the secret marriage of these two young creatures is pathetically related by Jacques de La Faye in her book, *Charlotte de Rohan et le duc d'Enghien*. She, however, informs us that it was not Mme. Bonaparte but Signora Letizia, her mother-in-law, who carried out the duke's last request and saw that his widow got what was meant for her. She also tells us the sad story of the duke's dog, a worthy *congénère* of the ugly but faithful Fortuné whose acquaintance we have already made, of Barri, the king of dogs, whose remains were preserved by the grateful monks, and can still be seen occupying a post of honour in the museum at Berne, and of Ulysses' friend who died of joy on seeing his master again. But the Empire was about to become a magnificent reality; the duc d'Enghien was soon to be forgotten.

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[1] *Caulaincourt*, Louis de (1773–1827): duc de Vicence, a French general, and the author of some very interesting memoirs concerning the days of the Empire.

CHAPTER IV

Napoleon becomes Emperor of the French—Eugène accompanies his step-father and his mother to Aix-la-Chapelle—He refuses to abandon his mother—The Emperor is crowned—Eugène falls in love for the third time—He is sent to Italy for the fourth time—He is made a prince of the French Empire—Napoleon on being crowned in Italy makes Eugène viceroy of that country—Uneasy lies the head which wears a crown—He incurs his step-father's anger.

ON May 18th, 1804, the members of the Senate drove in state to Saint-Cloud and proclaimed the First Consul, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of the French.

The success of Napoleon's plans resulted in endless struggles on the part of his brothers and sisters to obtain titles and kingdoms for themselves. Mme. de Rémusat, an eye-witness of these unseemly struggles, says :

" Although Bonaparte had good reason to complain of his brothers' conduct, Mme. Bonaparte always came in for praise because her invariably sweet disposition had a wonderfully soothing effect upon the irritated Consul. She never tried to obtain promises from him, either for herself or for her children ; and the trust she showed in his affection for Eugène and in the latter's reserve, in such contrast with the pretensions of the Bonapartes, could only astonish him and afford him much pleasure."

There were two persons whom the Emperor really loved at that time, and well did they return his affection. Did he not say of them :

" *My son* Eugène and Junot ! . . . Ah ! yes, there are two men who really love me ? "

Fête after fête now took place, not only in Paris, but in the provinces ; the Emperor and Empress had the pleasure of witnessing many magnificent spectacles which, however, made one or two clear-sighted men shake their heads, while others muttered curses upon the renegade.

Eugène accompanied his step-father and his mother on their journey to Aix-la-Chapelle and along the banks of the Rhine. While at Aix-la-Chapelle he was introduced, on August 28th, 1804, to Princess Elisabeth of Bavaria, the sister of the excellent creature whom fate later gave to him to be the perfect helpmate on his journey through life.

Constant gives an account of the meeting:

"The Princess Elisabeth is not handsome, but I think she would look prettier if she were better dressed. She has nice manners and is very talkative; so talkative, in fact, was she that she quite scandalized Napoleon. She was seated at dinner between the Emperor and Eugène de Beauharnais; accustomed to the little Court of her father, the Elector of Bavaria, she was naturally at her ease with Bonaparte. . . . Eugène, who has such perfect manners, was seated on the other side of the Princess; he behaved as he always does, and was most polite."

The enthusiasm of the French nation for their new Emperor manifested itself in gifts of all sorts. The Lyons silk manufacturers, out of gratitude for his interest in their welfare, presented him with a magnificent red silk coat embroidered in gold and nearly covered with oak, olive and laurel branches, symbolic of his victories and of the peace which France—and two or three other nations—hoped was in store for her. Although Eugène on seeing the Emperor clad in this splendid garment for the first time remarked in an undertone that it was only fit for a mountebank, Napoleon continued to wear it on State occasions; it henceforth went by the name of the *habit de Lyon*.

It was in little things, in matters of no apparent importance, that the Emperor showed his marvellous talent for governing. Nothing was too insignificant in the eyes of the man who had risen from nothing to everything, thanks to his own efforts. The coronation, which Napoleon intended to be one of the most magnificent ceremonies ever witnessed, was finally fixed for December 3rd, 1804. During the months which elapsed between the visit of the members of the Senate to Saint-Cloud and the ceremony itself, Napoleon's brothers and sisters made repeated efforts to persuade him to divorce their sister-in-law; they reminded him of her past misdeeds, none of which had been forgotten or forgiven by them, although the conduct of one of those sisters was no better than that of the *Générale* Bonaparte; they pointed out to him the terrible fact that he had no son to continue the dynasty which he had at last managed to build up for himself.

Wearied by Josephine's jealousy and consequent tactless behaviour, Napoleon began to yield to his relations' interested advice. In the month of October, while only two months still lay between Josephine and her coronation, Napoleon sent word to Eugène to come to Saint-Cloud as he wished to arrange matters with his step-son concerning his projected divorce. Eugène, on reaching that palace, found his mother and sister in tears. He expressed no surprise on hearing what his step-father intended to do; he did not try to alter his determination; he bowed to the stronger will. Had not his step-father already threatened once before to divorce his erring spouse? Ah! how much better it might have been for all concerned if he had done so then, instead of waiting until the golden crown of France and the iron crown of Italy were almost within her grasp. Eugène refused all the offers of assistance and protection which Napoleon made as a sort of compensation for the loss of his position as step-son to an Emperor, and all the advantages to be reaped therefrom both now and—what was far more important—in the future. He declared that "his mother's misfortunes prevented him accepting any gifts from the author of those misfortunes, and that he intended to follow her to whatever retreat she might choose—even to Martinique, if necessary—and that he would sacrifice everything in order to comfort and console her." Hortense expressed the same determination. These noble words made a great impression upon Napoleon, who listened in silence. For the second time he allowed himself to be influenced by his step-children, although it might have been better, considering what was to come, if he had stood firm. For the second time Josephine was saved from the consequences of her past misconduct by her children.

It was well known that Josephine was very superstitious: who would not have been so with a husband like Napoleon? Her pleasure and pride at receiving the crown from the hands of her all-powerful husband were nearly spoilt by a little incident which took place in Notre-Dame during the coronation ceremony. Just as she was about to descend from her throne in order to be crowned Empress of the French she discovered that she had lost her wedding-ring. Did not this loss betoken a speedy dissolution of her marriage, either by death or by a divorce? Luckily Eugène was near at hand; at a sign from his mother, he hastened to her side and inquired the cause of her distress. On hearing of her loss he, aided by Isabey, lifted up the cushions of the throne and soon discovered the missing ring.

A propos of missing jewels, the sprightly Mme. d'Abrantès, the wife of Napoleon's true friend, Junot, was not so lucky when, on the occasion of a ball given in honour of the coronation by Eugène in his *hôtel* in the rue de Lille, she too lost some jewels. She says:

"We ladies were made much of and invited everywhere. On the night of the ball given by Prince Eugène I wore a dress of geranium purple silk trimmed with silver leaves; I chose corals and diamonds as my jewels; I cannot explain what made me do so, but they certainly looked very well. The corals were particularly beautiful; my brother had had them polished at Marseilles and had matched each one most carefully so that the set might be quite perfect; the pear-shaped ear-rings were especially remarkable for their colour and size. . . . I was beginning a quadrille with Prince Eugène when I suddenly felt a violent pain in the lobes of my ears, caused by the heavy ear-rings. The Prince advised me to take them out, so I called Junot in order to give them into his care. But as he, as ill-luck would have it, was wearing a hussar's coat without any pockets, he could not take them. So, telling me to remember to fetch my ear-rings, he placed them on the mantelpiece behind me. I myself saw him leave them there, for I turned round to watch him. I continued to dance while he went off. As soon as the quadrille was over, the Prince reminded me of my ear-rings, which I then went to fetch. But we looked in vain: they had disappeared!

"The Prince uttered an exclamation of surprise; he was so angry I did not know how to calm him. He was all the more furious because no servants had entered the room during the quadrille. Junot, whom I had summoned to my side, told the Prince, on seeing how painful this scene was to me, that he had fetched my ear-rings while we were dancing and put them in his coat-pocket ! . . . The Prince was positively furious ; he was always so kind, such a perfect host, so careful whom he invited to his *hôtel !* But indeed there was a mighty crowd that night, and my ear-rings were never found ! "

We notice that Mme. d'Abrantès in her account of a fashionable ball during the early days of the Empire calls the Emperor's step-son " Prince " Eugène. As a matter of fact, Eugène did not receive this title until some weeks after the above-mentioned ball. On assuming the rôle of Emperor of the French, Napoleon had distributed titles and honours to those members of his family who were not content with what he had already given them. To his eldest brother, Joseph, he gave the title of Prince Imperial ; Louis Bonaparte, the husband of his step-daughter and sister-in-law Hortense, was made grand constable ; while to his brother-in-law, Murat, he gave the titles of prince and marshal. And yet Eugène was apparently forgotten.

Mme. de Rémusat says :

" The Empress could not help lamenting sometimes to herself when she saw that her son had no share in these promotions ; but she had the good taste to conceal her grief ; and Eugène, in the midst of this brilliant society, observed a calm, natural demeanour, which reflected great honour upon him and contrasted favourably with Murat's jealous impatience. . . . The Bonapartes were triumphant. Eugène, the object of their undying hatred, was positively ill-treated, which fact caused his mother much sorrow."

In this, as in many other incidents in Napoleon's life, female influence was at work, influence contrary to Eugène's interest unfortunately, and especially contrary to Josephine's peace of mind. The latter, while still wife of the First Consul, had chosen as her lady-in-waiting a certain Mme. Duchâtel, the young and very pretty spouse of an elderly official. This lady, who was fair, and possessed a most brilliant complexion, was then about the same age as Eugène, whom she had persuaded to fall in love with her. But Eugène was not her only victim, for first Murat, and then a no less important personage than the First Consul himself fell victims to her charms. Now, Mme. Bonaparte was quite willing to allow Mme. Duchâtel to carry on a flirtation with Eugène de Beauharnais ; but when she discovered that the pretty young woman had had the impudence to aspire to the affections of the master of the Tuileries her anger knew no bounds. The First Consul's coolness towards his step-son was probably caused by Mme. Duchâtel's revelations concerning our hero's passion, revelations which she cleverly used to goad Napoleon on towards accomplishing her aim. Eugène tells us in his memoirs that when the Emperor re-established etiquette at his Court he ceased to see as much of his step-father as he had done hitherto. But those kind friends who are always so careful to let us know that we are not so necessary to the happiness of those we love best on earth as we imagine ourselves to be, now tried to open Eugène's eyes to the fact that his step-father was purposely keeping him at a distance. However, Eugène had received too many proofs of Napoleon's affection for him to listen to their spiteful hints ; he trusted to time to close the little rift which he had determined should not widen by any fault on his side.

Some time afterwards the Emperor, through Josephine, offered Eugène the post of grand chamberlain ; this post the young man refused, however, stating that he preferred a military career. Had the Emperor offered him the post of equerry, he would have accepted it, for he was always passionately fond of horses.

Suddenly, towards the end of January, 1805, when the cold was most severe, Eugène received orders to be ready to start for Italy with his regiment within twenty-four hours. The Empress declared that this order was the outcome of Napoleon's jealousy of Eugène, for the Emperor was still under the spell of Mme. Duchâtel's beauty. However, Eugène must have been glad to leave France for a time ; he had suffered a good deal during the last few months.

Josephine wept bitterly on bidding her son farewell ; but as Eugène had extracted a promise from her that she would not protest against this act of injustice, she was forced to swallow her grief in silence. Eugène, as a soldier, was obliged to obey commands.

The leave-taking between the step-son and the step-father was decidedly chilly—on the part of the latter, at least; perhaps the Emperor was secretly annoyed with himself for sending away his step-son in a moment of jealousy.

But although Eugène was able to persuade his mother to conceal her anger, he was powerless to prevent his sister Hortense expressing her opinion of her step-father's cruel treatment of our hero. In a conversation with Mme. de Rémusat, Hortense not only gave vent to her indignation, but she openly expressed her admiration for her brother's Griselda-like submission.

"If the Emperor," said she, "had expected one of his own relatives to do such a thing, what a fuss they would have made!—whereas Eugène obeys and says nothing. I really think that Bonaparte cannot fail to be struck by his obedience."

Napoleon, now free to carry on his flirtation with Mme. Duchâtel, went to La Malmaison with all his Court, while Eugène, without a murmur, trudged through snow and rain towards Italy, where he was soon to reap a rich reward for his submission. He was on horseback, in front of his regiment, soaked to the skin with half-melted snow, when he received a very pleasant piece of news.

"I was at Tarare, near Lyons," says he, "when a messenger arrived bringing me the news that I had been made arch-chancellor and a prince of the French Empire. I continued to live with my troops and my officers as I had always done. I received quantities of letters of congratulation filled with praise and protestations of friendship, which I took for what they were worth, as if I could foresee *what experience, since those days, has taught me to be the truth.* One thing alone touched me, and those were the terms used by the Emperor in his message to the Senate announcing my appointment. . . . These public tokens of esteem and confidence from a great man, the head of the nation, uttered in the presence of his statesmen, seemed to me far more precious than the titles and posts which I probably only owed to the fact that I was related to him by my mother's marriage."

Here is the message in question:

"Senators! we have appointed our step-son, Eugène

Beauharnais, arch-chancellor of the Empire. Of all our actions, this action is the most agreeable to us. Educated by our care and under our supervision since his childhood, he has shown himself worthy to imitate and, with God's help, to surpass one day the lessons and examples which we have set before him. Although still young, we shall consider him from this moment, by the experience earned under very trying circumstances, as one of the pillars of our throne and as one of the most valiant defenders of the fatherland.

"Surrounded by the trials and disappointments inseparable from our exalted position, our heart feels the need of affection, the affection and unfailing devotion of this child of our adoption ; such consolation is doubtless necessary to all mankind and especially to us whose whole existence is devoted to the welfare of the nation.

"Our blessing will accompany this young prince throughout his career ; one day he will, with the help of Providence, be worthy of the approbation of posterity.

"Given at our palace of the Tuileries, the 12th *pluviôse, an XIII* (February 1st, 1805)."

Eugène now wrote a letter thanking his step-father for these titles which, considering what the Bonapartes had received, were hardly worth mentioning :

"Sire—I have just received the letter with which Your Majesty has kindly honoured me. You had already loaded me with favours ; I did not think it was possible to add to their number. It has pleased Your Majesty, however, to give me yet another proof of your kindness by raising me to the position of prince and arch-chancellor of State. These titles can only increase the devotion and boundless fidelity which I have sworn to show to Your Majesty. These sentiments, Sire, will only end with my life, which will be worthless in my eyes as soon as it ceases to be of use to you.

"Kindly receive, Sire, the expression of my gratitude. I have the honour to remain, etc., etc., "EUGÈNE."

Mme. Duchâtel was not to enjoy the success of her scheming for very long after Eugène's departure. The inevitable was about to happen : the Emperor soon wearied of her and announced his intention of following his step-son to Italy.

M. de Rémusat[1] preceded the Emperor by some weeks; on reaching Milan, this gentleman was cordially welcomed by Eugène, who was leading a very dull life. His lot was not altogether a pleasant one just at that time; as the representative of Napoleon, he had a good deal to do with the Milanese nobility, who showed their hatred of their new master by holding aloof from Eugène's receptions under the pretext that they were too poor to entertain and to attend any official functions. Eugène had endeavoured to ingratiate himself with France's new subjects, but some time had to elapse before he made any progress. On seeing M. de Rémusat, he hastened to question that gentleman as to what was happening in Paris, and, above all, whether the Emperor and Mme. Duchâtel were as close friends as ever. It must have been some satisfaction to him to learn that Mme. Duchâtel's star was already on the wane.

The coronation of Napoleon as King of Italy took place in great splendour on May 23rd in the cathedral of Milan. A few days after this event Napoleon made Eugène viceroy of Italy with the title of Prince Eugène Napoleon. . . . But the name of Eugène de Beauharnais was ever a more glorious title!

It was the Emperor's wish that his step-son should marry Marie-Louise, the widowed queen of Etruria[2] and the daughter of Charles IV of Spain, whose husband, Louis of Parma, but lately deceased, the great kingmaker had placed on the throne of Etruria only four years ago. For some unknown reason, however, the marriage fell through. Napoleon, in making the faithful Eugène viceroy of Italy, was probably influenced by compunction for his unjust treatment. Anyone would have thought that Josephine would have been overjoyed that her son's merits had at last been recognized and suitably rewarded ; but such was not the case. She received the news with tears. Would she not now see less of her son than ever ?

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[1] *The comte de Rémusat* (1762–1823): was prefect of the palace during the Empire, head chamberlain, inspector of the national theatres, and during the Restoration, prefect, first of the Department of Haute Garonne and then of that of the Nord. His wife was the celebrated authoress mentioned in this work.

[2] *Marie-Louise*, queen of Etruria (1782–1824), daughter of Charles IV and Marie-Louise of Spain, married in 1798 Louis de Bourbon, son of the duke of Parma, who, in 1801, received the kingdom of Etruria in exchange for his patrimony. On her husband's death, in 1803, Marie-Louise placed her son Louis II on the throne of Etruria; dispossessed by the French in 1808, she went to France and shared her father's captivity. In 1815, she obtained the duchy of Lucca for her son.

The Emperor noticed her grief and tried to comfort her by remarking :

" You are crying, Josephine ! You are very silly to do so. You are crying because you are going to be separated from your son. If separation from your children causes you so much grief, just think what I must suffer ! Your affection for them makes me realize all I lose by being childless ! "

This speech only made Josephine weep all the more : did it not remind her of the terrible fact that she had failed to give the Emperor a son ?

It was probably during Napoleon's stay in Milan that the Marquis de Gallo, Minister to Ferdinand IV, king of Naples, suggested that Eugène should marry one of his master's daughters, who in after years, as Marie-Amélie, wife of Louis-Philippe, reigned over the French. But this project, like the others, came to naught.

Before leaving Milan, Napoleon entrusted to M. di Melzi (later duca di Lodi) the task of guiding the viceroy in his first essay at governing. Although only twenty-five years of age, Eugène had seen quite enough of his step-father's methods of ruling to be able to profit thereby. His first care, on finding himself left to do more or less as he thought fit, was to gather round him all the persons of note then in Milan ; he was determined to win the Italian nation to his side by kindness, and for some years he seems to have succeeded. He chose his body-guard from among the members of the oldest and proudest families in Italy. Conscription was established upon the same basis as in France ; nevertheless the country, for the first year or two, was only expected to provide six thousand men. Some of the convents, of which there were far too many, were closed, several small establishments being united so as to make one important community.

But Eugène was a very different man from his step-father; his was a yielding nature ; he needed help and counsel from others. His brain was incapable of conceiving gigantic plans, of carrying them through and of forcing Fate to bend to his will. He was also incapable of taking the initiative except in matters when his honour was at stake, and then he could step out and speak his mind pretty plainly, as his father-in-law afterwards discovered to his astonishment.

Now although Napoleon appreciated Eugène's good qualities, he was not blind to the fact that the young man was inclined to let people impose upon him : Mme. Duchâtel had opened his mind on that point. No sooner did Napoleon leave Milan than he began a lengthy correspondence with Eugène, a series of letter-sermons, instructions and reprimands ; for, notwithstanding our hero's desire to please his step-father, he was not always successful.

Josephine did not start with her husband when the latter went to visit Cremona, Verona, Mantua, Piacenza and several other towns in his new kingdom, but remained with her son for a few weeks. She spent a good deal of her time seeing the country round Milan ; she also paid a flying visit to Como when Eugène wrote the following letter to his step-father :

" Sire—I have the honour to inform Your Majesty that the Empress started yesterday at four o'clock in the morning for Como. I then spent an hour with Contaïni trying to arrange matters concerning the expenses of my household, a subject which he is to discuss with Your Majesty at Piacenza. . . . I think you have forgotten to make me an allowance for my private expenses, such as the salaries of my valets, my wardrobe, my library, etc. No sum so far has been set aside for these items. I can assure Your Majesty that I shall exercise the greatest economy. . . . I shall need Your Majesty's indulgence. I feel that, as long as I live, I shall require your advice and especially now at the beginning of my career as viceroy ; I shall often be obliged to trouble you about unimportant matters."

But it was by attending to matters of no apparent importance that Napoleon showed his genius. In the two following letters, written the same day from the marsh-city, Mantua, Napoleon treats of two widely different subjects : horticulture and quartering soldiers. The first letter probably explains the presence of the magnificent buttercup yellow satin Empire furniture, now rapidly fading, but still to be seen and admired by the argus-eyed tourist in the palace of Mantua.

"MANTUA, *June 20th*, 1805.

"The palace of Mantua is kept in very bad repair; the palazzo del Te is no better.[1] I wish both palaces to be kept in good condition, and the cost to be defrayed by my civil list. Mantua is an important place, and it would be a good thing to spend a month there every winter. This town is the bulwark of the kingdom. . . . I wish the land outside the Porta Cerese to be planted with young trees. I do not know where there are any plantations, but it ought not to be a difficult matter to find trees suitable to the climate of Mantua. Have a plan drawn up for planting the forum Bonaparte, and see that the land is planted during the winter months with two or three thousand young trees and shrubs. . . ."

"MANTUA, *June 20th*, 1805.

"Be sure that the French and Italian officers quartered at Mantua pay for their quartering; I wish these officers to be quartered, but I also wish the owners of the houses in which they lodge to be paid for their trouble."

It was Napoleon's wish that Eugène should endeavour to persuade all the younger members of the Italian nobility to join the army. In obedience to this wish, the viceroy conceived a plan for forming a regiment of dragoons, which regiment was to wear a white uniform with collar and facings of tricolour silk and to bear the name of *les dragons de Joséphine;* this name did not meet with the Emperor's approval.

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[1] What would Napoleon say if he could see the Palazzo del Te in its present condition? And yet neither neglect, desolation nor malaria can destroy the charm of this place, which got its name from the marshy plain, Thejetto or Tejetto, upon which Francesco IV Gonzaga had a stable built for his celebrated breed of horses. The marchese Frederico, the first duke of Mantua, commissioned Giulio Romano to build a villa on the spot occupied by the stable. This villa eventually developed into the present palace. The *Sala dei cavalli* contains some most admirable and life-like frescoes, portraits of six of the duke's favourite horses.

"GENOA, *July 3rd*, 1805.

"The regiment of dragoons cannot bear the name of Josephine; the title of *dragons de la Reine* would be much more suitable. I send you a decree to that effect. It would be absurd to call regiments after women! . . ."

Eugène found the task of reconciling the old Italian nobility with the new French governor anything but easy. A certain Signor Salimbini, brother to the general of that name, was particularly violent in his attacks upon the new *régime*. In the following letter, Eugène tells his step-father how he treated his opponent:

"MILAN, *July 14th*, 1805.

"Yesterday I sent for M. Salimbini, a member of the legislative body. I had been informed that he had been heard to make the following remark: '*We will show these French dogs that we are Italians!*' The Minister of the Interior introduced him to me. I then reproached him sternly in the Minister's presence, and told him that, although I occupied a post which prevented me revenging any personal affront, I should not allow, nay, I should punish very severely, any remarks tending to divide the French and Italian nations or directed against the two governments now united in one person. I then added: 'You can say whatever you like about me; I have no reason to fear what you may say, and I will show all Italy I am a better Italian and more devoted to the fatherland than you are.' After this little sermon, which was very severe, I can assure you, and which lasted a good quarter of an hour, the legislator excused himself to the best of his ability; he even gave me his word of honour that he had not uttered the speech which had been repeated to me. I pretended to believe him, although I was pretty well certain that he was not telling the truth; however, he has had his little lecture, which, I hope, will serve as a lesson for the future; I knew that he deserved it. He is one of those men who delight to foment troubles with the existing *régime* and who always praise past governments, no matter how bad they may have been. I beg Your Majesty to be assured that I did not exceed my duty, and that my intention was to show the busybodies that I could be severe upon occasion and that I was not to be trifled with."

To this letter, Eugène's mentor, who had returned to France, replied as follows:

"My Cousin—You are mistaken in supposing that the Italians are simple-minded; they are spiteful. Don't let them forget that I am at liberty to do whatever I like. You must be firm with everybody and especially with the Italians, who only obey when ordered to do so. They will not respect you unless they fear you, and they will not fear you until they see that you understand their false, double dispositions. However, you need only say: 'It is the Emperor's will!' They know very well that I never change my mind. I have just ordered M. Lagarde, one of the Minister of Police's employés, to go to you; this man has filled many rôles, and he is a perfect watch-dog. Keep him at a distance and do not communicate with him except through M. Méjean. *Do as I tell you and don't consult your own feelings, the feelings of an inexperienced youth.*"

The above opinion of the Italian character, coming from a man who was more Italian than French, is somewhat surprising. Circumstances, however, proved that those statesmen whom Eugène imagined he had won over to his side were but fair-weather friends. And he was still to have some trouble before even these fair-weather friends would consent to play their part. In consequence of the ever-increasing discontent of the Italian legislative corps, Eugène now dissolved that body—without first obtaining his step-father's consent. This imprudence aroused Napoleon's ire, and he took care to let Eugène know that it had done so.

Overcome with dismay at having displeased his step-father, Eugène wrote:

"MILAN, *July* 30*th*, 1805.

"Sire—It was with the deepest sorrow that I learnt that Your Majesty was displeased with my conduct concerning the legislative corps. This sad news has made me very unhappy; the lesson has caused me too much pain for me not to profit by it in future, or at least for me not to endeavour still more, if it be possible, not to displease you. . . ."

Napoleon was sometimes known to make his servitors write letters supposed to come from the said servitors, but in reality dictated by the master. Did he not do so on that occasion when, some years later, he made that excellent Mme. de Rémusat hint in a letter to his ex-wife that she had better leave France for a while and go and pay a visit to her son Eugène, lest the public rejoicings in honour of the birth of the eaglet, the longed-for heir, should prove too painful to her? On this occasion it was the hand of one of Napoleon's truest friends, General Duroc, which wrote the letter conceived by the master-brain:

"CAMP OF BOULOGNE,
"*July* 31*st*, 1805.

"*Monseigneur*—His Majesty to-day did me the honour to call me into his study in order to talk to me about you. Although I am going to pain you, I must do so. You can easily prevent it happening again.

"Yes, His Majesty is angry, very angry with you; here is the cause of his displeasure. First of all you have exceeded your authority. You do things which you have no right to do; thus, for instance, you have dissolved the legislative body, and you have made alterations in laws which you were charged to execute.

"His Majesty complains that you have fixed the expenditure for each department; that you act too hurriedly and so you spend twice as much as you ought to spend. Do not listen to those around you; do not believe false rumours. . . .

"The Emperor also complains that you criticize and give your opinion upon questions which, you may be sure, he does not decide without weighing each one most carefully. . . . Never take upon yourself to do anything which does not lie in your province. As to matters which only concern yourself, do what you will. If you make mistakes, you will be forgiven. Be assured that the Emperor will not forget you; that he will always love you, trust you and praise you for your behaviour towards him.

"I know that I have said some hard and unpleasant things, my dear prince; not only am I authorized to do so by my genuine affection for you, but I am glad to conceal nothing from you, so convinced am I that I am doing it for your good and that I shall be able to help you carry out His Majesty's intentions, which, I know, is your dearest wish. I am sure he will think as I think.

"How this letter will grieve you! But be brave and profit by my advice. Cease to regret that you are far away from your family, and learn to govern as he ought to govern who rules in the name of our great Emperor.

"DUROC."

Scribbled in the Emperor's own handwriting was the brief postscript:

"I wrote to you yesterday to tell you how displeased I was with you; I hope you did not take the news to heart too much."

Poor Eugène! in after years, and especially in 1814, he was blamed by Marmont, and by many another of the latter's way of thinking, for his lack of independence.

CHAPTER V

Eugène works too hard—He makes the acquaintance of his future brother-in-law—More scolding—Austria begins to give trouble again—Eugène prepares for war—Napoleon's habits of secrecy—Eugène issues a proclamation to the Italian nation—He learns of his step-father's successes and regrets that he has no share in those successes—Ghiraldina.

EUGÈNE led a truly strenuous life as viceroy of Italy; indeed, he worked so hard and took his duties so seriously that his step-father had to tell him to give himself more time for rest and recreation.

Napoleon had lately cast his eye upon the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which he thought would give his elder brother Joseph a suitable position among the other members of the very "pushing" Bonaparte family. As Ferdinand IV, the half-imbecile King of Naples, and his masterful wife, Marie-Caroline, had joined the coalition against France, and had played the Emperor false upon more than one occasion, Napoleon considered himself quite justified in depriving the King of his possessions. Eugène was to help bring this about by sending a powerful detachment to the Neapolitan frontier to join General Gouvion Saint-Cyr,[1] who already had fifteen thousand troops at his command, should the latter require reinforcements.

Austria was preparing to give trouble. Francis I, Emperor of Austria, had never forgiven Napoleon for having forced him to sign the Treaties of Campo-Formio and Lunéville; by signing the former treaty he had lost nearly all his valuable possessions on the left bank of the Rhine. And Napoleon had inflicted so many other indignities upon him, such as the victories of Wattignies, Lodi, Castiglione, Arcole, Rivoli, Marengo and Hohenlinden, that he was dying to revenge himself upon this self-made Emperor who dared to dictate his commands to an Emperor born in the purple. But it was Napoleon's intention to let his future father-in-law take all the responsibility for what was to follow.

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[1] *Gouvion Saint-Cyr*, Laurent (1764–1830): served with Hoche, Jourdan and Moreau; commanded the *armées de Rome* and *de Naples*. He was Minister of War from 1815 to 1821.

From the beginning of August Napoleon's letters to Eugène are full of advice to act with precaution so as to avoid giving Austria an excuse for going to war, to provide his army with such necessary items as mounts, provisions, baggage-waggons, ammunition, etc. The Emperor counted upon his step-son's obedience, and he was not disappointed. While preparing to second his step-father, Eugène received a visit from his future brother-in-law, the prince of Bavaria, later Ludwig I, king of Bavaria :[1]

" MILAN, *August* 5*th*, 1805.

" . . . The Prince of Bavaria arrived in Milan last Friday night ; he called upon me Saturday morning and I returned his call on Sunday at midday. He dined with me that day ; there were thirty-five persons present, ministers, councillors of State, a few ladies, some generals, etc. I sent him a guard of honour and also placed some saddle-horses and a box at the theatre at his disposal ; in short, I did everything I could to be polite to him. He seemed very anxious to see our French *cuirassiers* ; I shall take him to Lodi one day this week. This young man is nineteen years of age. He seems a trifle more wide-awake than is usually the case with German princes. Unfortunately he is deaf, and he stammers into the bargain, two defects which make conversation with him rather difficult. He has been travelling for the last eight months and he appears to have profited by his journeying. He is accompanied by the General Graf von Reuss and two chamberlains. The former gentleman has only been six weeks with him; he took the place of another mentor who was probably a little too severe with the Prince, for he was sent off at a moment's notice in disgrace. It appears that the Prince is going to travel in France and that he will be in Paris in the autumn. . . ."

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[1] *Ludwig I* (Karl-August), king of Bavaria, born August 25th, 1786: he was the son of Maximilian I of Bavaria by his first wife. In 1810, he married princess Theresa of Saxony. He succeeded to the throne of Bavaria in 1825, and began his reign by some wise financial reforms ; at first his rule was lenient, but he soon became very despotic, owing to the bad advice of the Bavarian clergy and the influence of his mistress, Lola Montès. The populace finally lost patience and manifested its discontent so forcibly that he was obliged to abdicate in favour of his son, Maximilian II of Bavaria. He retired into private life and died in 1868. To his taste, not always very sure, Munich owes many of her public buildings : the Odéon theatre, the new Pinacothèque, the royal palace, etc. He also cultivated belles-lettres and wrote a volume of poems, a play, etc.

Eugène again incurs his step-father's displeasure, as is proved by the following letter written from Boulogne, where Napoleon was contemplating an attack upon that perfidious Albion whose white cliffs looked so invitingly close.

"My Cousin—I have received your letter; I cannot find words to tell you how displeased I am at your behaviour in expressing an opinion concerning my conduct; this is the third time in the space of one month. You had no right to mangle my laws concerning the finances of Italy (they bore my signature) and to make others. Your conduct in slighting my authority is less painful to me than your evident intention not to take my advice. What would you have me say in reply to your letters? I do not write to amuse myself; and when I do write, I am not accustomed to write in vain. What is the good of my writing you advice if you have already made up your mind to act before you get my reply? If you value my esteem and my affection you must never, under no pretext whatever (no! not even if the moon threatens to fall upon Milan), do anything which lies outside your province. I wish you to trust me so completely that you allow yourself to be guided by me in all things. You are the first person who has ever made me seem in the wrong—and in the presence of thirty or forty blackguards, too! This would not have happened if you had not been over-officious: don't let it occur again! Do not be afraid that this little incident will prevent me doing justice to your fine qualities; I want to keep my good opinion of you. . . . I was waiting to hear from you before writing to Milan. Whenever you write to me about anything, be sure to tell me if you are waiting for my advice or if you are acting without my consent; remember that you will be guilty of great disrespect towards me if, while your letter or mine is on the road, you take upon yourself to act as you think I should act under the circumstances. . . ."

NAPOLEON AT BOULOGNE IN 1804

From the picture by Maurice Orange. By kind permission of the artist

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Napoleon had now gathered 200,000 experienced troops round him at Boulogne; he counted upon his flotilla to help him conquer Albion, who, as we all know, had only begun to prepare for war when the war was on her threshold—the Channel. But the attack never came off. To Austria's timely revolt against Napoleon's ever-increasing ambition England probably owed the fact that she did not fall into the hands—for a time, at least—of some discontented and unsuccessful member of the Bonaparte family. The following letter from Napoleon brings the past very vividly before our mind:

"CAMP OF BOULOGNE,
"*August* 13*th*, 1805.

". . . On arriving in the bay of Ferrol my fleet took the offensive; we got the best of the encounter. France is now mistress of the seas; our mission is accomplished. Had it not been for the fact that two Spanish vessels drifted off and allowed themselves to be captured during the night, this day would have been one of the most glorious in the annals of the French navy.

"I gave orders to my flotilla here to attack the English fleet; we drove the latter quite three and a half leagues out into the Channel, and this notwithstanding the fact that the English had some men-of-war to support them.

"Austria is mustering her troops; I have requested her to desist within a fortnight from to-day or else I shall face about and march upon Vienna with my army of 200,000 men.

"Nothing can be more beautiful than my army here.

"I scolded you in my last letters; but I am sure that you will understand that, when you are in need of my advice, you must write to me and then wait to act until you can get my reply. . . ."

Eugène, like most persons afflicted with sensitive natures, was rather inclined to cry over spilt milk, as we see from the following letter of contrition:

"MONZA, *August* 16*th*, 1805.

"Sire—Your Majesty's birthday was kept yesterday throughout your kingdom. I was delighted to see the genuine enthusiasm displayed by the Milanese. Illuminations were by no means universal, but the populace indulged in all sorts of games which lasted until nightfall. The people's cries of: 'Long life to the Emperor!' at the end of the play showed that they were proud to be Your Majesty's subjects. However, I could not forget that Your Majesty was displeased with me; and I was certainly, although I entered heart and soul into their rejoicings, the saddest of all those who kept the fête of Saint Napoleon.[1] The Prince of Bavaria was to have started two days ago, but he remained in Milan on purpose to help us keep this memorable anniversary. He left this morning for Paris, via Geneva, Lyons, Marseilles and Bordeaux."

Napoleon graciously accords his pardon in a few words:

"CAMP OF BOULOGNE,
"*August* 19*th*, 1805.

"My Cousin—I have just received your letter of the 16th instant. *Let bygones be bygones.* But you must only do what it is your duty to do; more than that is useless. . . ."

As if realizing that the above note was still too severe, the step-father, on the same day, sends another and a kinder missive:

"CAMP OF BOULOGNE,
"*August* 19*th*, 1805.

"My Cousin—I thank you for your kind messages concerning my fête day. Hortense has been here for the last two days; she much enjoys visiting the different camps.

"P.S.—*I am convinced that you are genuinely fond of me;* rest assured that I love you."

Eugène meanwhile was preparing for the war which was on the eastern horizon; these preparations were rendered more difficult from the fact that Napoleon wished the Italians to know nothing of what he contemplated doing.

"CAMP OF BOULOGNE,
"*September* 1*st*, 1805.

"My Cousin—I have received your report containing the names of the young men belonging to your guard of honour.

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[1] Saint Napoleon, a Christian martyr whose name *Neapolas* Pius VII, in his anxiety to please his master, altered to that of *Napoleone* and inscribed it thus in the Calendar.

You can now form another guard : you will find it necessary in the stormy future.

" I shall be back in Paris in a few days' time. This autumn will bring forth some great events. Hasten to conclude the victualling of Mantua. . . . Study the country ; a knowledge of the geography of a country always comes in useful sooner or later.

" My army is on the march. Continue, nevertheless, to say that I am only sending a detachment of thirty thousand men to protect the banks of the Rhine. . . .

" The greater part of the war budget ought now to be devoted to victualling the different strongholds. . . ."

On September 2nd, 1805, Eugène writes to his step-father from Monza :

" Sire—I have the honour to send Your Majesty a report which was handed to me last night.

" If Prussia perseveres in her system of neutrality, and if Austria thinks better of what she contemplated undertaking, the King of the Two Sicilies, supposing he has got any common sense left in his head, ought to cease defying us, and drop that servile deference which he has hitherto shown towards England. Into what an abyss of misery nations are plunged by anger, jealousy and unsatiated spite ! And into what excesses a Court falls which only owes its existence to treachery, low intrigue and dishonesty ! But the end is in sight.

" Here in Italy everybody is quivering with excitement. All kinds of moral, physical and political upheavals are taking place. And then, to make matters worse, Vesuvius does nothing but vomit forth flames ; yesterday a flood of lava flowed down the mountain for two hours, spread over the country around to a distance of five miles, and then, after dividing into two smaller streams, emptied itself into the sea. . . ."

In another letter Eugène assures his hard task-master that he is straining every nerve to be ready for the call to battle.

" MONZA, *September 4th*, 1805.

" Sire—Your Majesty can rest assured that I shall do my very best to execute your commands as quickly as possible.

I shall do myself the honour to inform you day by day of my success.

"I must tell Your Majesty that, for the last four or five days, a rumour has been circulated that Masséna[1] is coming to take Marshal Jourdan's[2] place, and that the latter is about to join the *armée du Rhin*. Luckily this rumour was spread before your letter arrived; for, although I did not breathe a word about the matter, they might have read the news in my face. . . ."

At Napoleon's command, Eugène now inserted notices in the Milanese newspapers to the effect that the Austrians had not crossed the Adige yet, that the French ambassador was still in Vienna, and that Austria had no intention of recalling her representative from the French capital. He concluded with a hint that the Emperor was ready to fall upon any nation which might be so foolhardy as to rouse his ire.

When Masséna passed through Milan on his way to Naples—and victory—he found everything in readiness, notwithstanding the impoverished condition of the country.

Now, Eugène's secret desire was to be allowed to fight—was he not the son of a brave soldier and the step-son of the greatest soldier the world has ever seen? In the following letter he almost begs to be allowed to help gather fresh laurels for Europe's master:

"MONZA, *September 9th*, 1805.

"Sire—I have been lucky enough to arrest two or three Austrian spies; as it is pretty well proved that they are guilty, the least they can hope for is imprisonment.

"It is a remarkable fact that money is more plentiful in Venice than in Milan. People say, with reason, that this money is supplied by the English government, and very probably by the Russian, too. Stocks are falling in London on account of the huge quantity of bank-notes on the market.

"I have felt rather depressed lately while superintending the preparations for a war which will surely decide the fate of the world; it makes me sad to remain passive—not as far as the preparations are concerned, for I am constantly attending to the matter—but to think that I shall perhaps have no share in the war. I have re-read Your Majesty's letter in which you give me cause to hope that I shall have a share in it, after all, and be near you if circumstances permit. Your Majesty knows better than I do how I can best serve you. Your Majesty also knows that it is necessary for me to complete my education in the military profession; in short, you must know that I shall always be happy to prove to you in one way or in another my very tender and very deep attachment for you."

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[1] *Masséna*, André (1758–1817): marshal of France, distinguished himself during the wars of the Republic and the Empire.

[2] *Jourdan*, Jean Baptiste (1762–1833): was also made marshal of France by Napoleon. He became Governor of the Invalides.

We find from a letter written by Eugène to his stepfather, dated September 13th, that Masséna had requested the viceroy to provide him with considerable sums of money, which he did with some trouble, for, although Napoleon was so prodigal of human lives, he was not so in the case of hard cash, and he was in the habit of examining each item of Eugène's expenditure. In order to provide for the huge army which was now marching east, requisitions had to be made—a cruel proceeding, no matter how carefully it may be carried out.

Masséna, "the favoured child of fortune," as Napoleon called him, was not altogether without feelings of pity, for he said to Eugène, *à propos* of the said requisitions:

"I will not allow the Italians to be treated as a conquered people; I will not allow their cattle to be taken from them: we have already seized their grain. They want their cattle to help them plough and cultivate the land."

Those persons who were commissioned to carry out the requisitions seized the opportunity in order to line their own pockets at the expense of the unfortunate peasantry. In many parts of Italy vouchers were given in exchange for horses, conveyances or victuals seized, but these vouchers were not always paid upon presentation. On discovering this lamentable state of affairs, Eugène ordered his prefects to advance sums of money upon each voucher, the sum to be larger in proportion to the poverty of the district.

Napoleon knew full well that his *cousin*, as he called Eugène before he began to call him *son*, was burning to deal a blow at the foolhardy Emperor who had dared to excite the Corsican's anger, for he says in a letter to the viceroy's mother about this time :

". . . I will let Eugène do some fighting as soon as I am sure of Italy."

The following letter may be said to contain the secret of Napoleon's success, not only in warfare, but in some of his passing love affairs, too—for instance, his *liaison* with Mme. Walewska : for a woman ever loves a masterful man who knows what he wants and intends to get it by force or by persuasion :

"SAINT-CLOUD, *September* 16*th*, 1805.

"My Cousin—I have received your letter of September 11th. I have given orders that three or four thousand vehicles be requisitioned in the different departments of France. I think you ought to do the same for my *armée d'Italie*. You must see for yourself that it is impossible to *purchase* horses and vehicles—such an operation would require six months at least. In war time, horses and waggons belonging to the peasantry are always seized. I can only approve of what you tell me concerning this matter. We can talk of peace, but we must hold ourselves in readiness for war.

"You tell me that you have made General Lacombe Saint-Michel borrow two hundred horses ; what good are two hundred horses ? If the Austrians were in Italy, they would not go to work so gently ; they are behaving in Venice as people have always done in time of war ; I don't know why you should feel any repugnance to do the same. I am surprised that the Minister of War has not opened your eyes on the subject. On all similar occasions horses have been seized. I did not *purchase* nine hundred waggons when I was in Italy : no ! I *seized* two thousand and took them as I happened to require them, which was very hard on the country.

"You must not be frightened by the Italians' outcries : they are always grumbling. Make them ask themselves the question : 'How did the Austrians treat us ? What did they do ?' Be firm with them. . . . I wish you to remain at Monza. Be careful to keep the iron crown within reach, so that you can remove it unknown to anybody if necessary. In short, rest assured that, although I count upon Italy's support, her fate lies in my hands. . . . The day you leave Milan, issue a proclamation announcing my return before another month has elapsed. Be sure when I begin to show my hand to do the same in Italy. . . . I think you had better have fifty thousand pairs of shoes made as quickly and as quietly as possible, so that you can send them to the army if they are required. Fifty thousand pairs of shoes will cost from two to three thousand *livres* in Milan, and the benefit which the army will reap therefrom is incalculable; but you must have proper leather shoes and not cardboard things such as one usually sees in Italy. Pay great attention to this matter, and be very strict. Take care to have them ready for *vendémiaire* if you think you can get them properly made. I suppose that the cavalry regiments are provided with boots; if you hear that they need such articles, you can have a thousand pairs made. A few good coppers and some camping apparatus might prove useful; have all these things prepared as quietly as possible, without the army knowing anything about it, so that you do not prevent them making their own preparations; for if they find out what you are about, they will leave you to do everything. It is usually the shoes which give out in time of war. I think that the workmen from the Milanese *dépôts* who have lately joined the *armée de Naples* might make these shoes; let them make a few pairs for themselves and then send the bulk of the shoes to Ancona, where the troops will be delighted to receive them. . . ."

Yet another letter from the Emperor—this time a letter of encouragement:

"SAINT-CLOUD, *September 22nd*, 1805.

". . . Encourage Masséna, encourage your officers! You have seventy thousand troops in Italy—a third more than I ever had at my disposal when I was your age. The Austrians' bragging cannot deceive old soldiers; they are too accustomed to it. Austria has not anything like seventy thousand troops in Italy; her army is nothing but a collection of odds and ends and cannot be compared to my army. I shall be at Strasburg on the 4th *vendémiaire*. Bessières has already started."

Napoleon now decides to throw off the mask and let Italy see that he intends to humble Austria, her old foe. From Strasburg he writes to Eugène, telling him to draw up a proclamation to that effect :

"STRASBURG, *September 29th*, 1805.

"My Cousin—I desire you to write a proclamation informing my subjects in Italy that I am now in Germany ; that Austria has been so unjust as to declare war against me, but that she will regret her folly ; that, no matter where I may be, I shall always care for Italy's interests and defend her, so she need have no fear.

"Have it printed in your gazettes that I am with the army ; that it is on the march ; that the Austrian army has already begun to fly ; that terror and confusion have taken the place of arrogance and presumption. Do not mention that you are acting at my advice. Say that Prussia is arming one hundred thousand men, that she is marching towards the Russian frontier in order to awe that country. Do not mention the fact that hostilities have already begun—unless Marshal Masséna has already begun similar hostilities in Italy—so that we may not spoil the commander-in-chief's plans. . . ."

Napoleon probably owed much of his success to his habits of secrecy, to his reluctance to make his plans known to others until they were as mature as careful thought and minute calculations could make them. Were not many of his most important moves upon life's chess-board only known beforehand to those whom he considered absolutely devoted to his cause ? (Alas ! in more than one case he was cruelly mistaken.) Was not his sudden departure from Egypt and return to France in October, 1799, planned before any of his immediate entourage knew anything about the matter ? And that other departure, that flight from burning Moscow, that most terrible page in Napoleon's life-history, a page so full of awful details of suffering that it blots out the memory of the valour and the all-embracing talents of the young General Bonaparte—as we like best to think of him—was not that departure only known to a few ? And the last, the most wonderful episode in the Eagle's career, when, returning from Elba to shake his pinions in his aerie for the last time, he counted upon his sudden reappearance on French soil to rouse his last remaining *vieux grognards*, the soldiers who had fought under him in Egypt, Italy, Germany, Austria and Russia, to help him to reconquer the throne of France, to which he had the greatest right—and full well did they answer his expectations. But it was not to be: Fate had turned on her wheel and wrenched the lock out of his hand which she had allowed him to hold for so many years.

In obedience to his step-father's commands, Eugène now wrote a proclamation to the people of Italy informing them that their old enemy, Austria, had declared war against their Emperor by sending the archduke Karl[1] to invade their country, that Napoleon had tried to avoid a war, but that he was now placed in such a position that he was obliged to take up arms in his own defence and in defence of Italy and Bavaria, both of which countries had good reason to hate Austria.

At the same time Napoleon, in a brief letter to Masséna, ordered him to protect Italy from the Austrian troops, and promised that when he had done with Austria and Russia he would come and assist him to rid Italy of any remaining Austrian soldiers.

Eugène now gives us a vivid account of the troubles attendant upon war in Italy, that much-tried country whose two ever-hungry masters, Church and State, then as now, left her peasantry scarcely sufficient *soldi* to keep life and body together:

"MONZA, *September 29th*, 1805.

"Sire, . . . I continue to see that Your Majesty's commands are carried out. I have again written to-day to General Chasseloup[2] promising to give him the money necessary for the fortifications ; however, I shall only be able to give him half the sum required ; he shall have the other half in a fortnight's time. The Italian treasury is unable to meet all the demands made upon it, but Your Majesty may rely upon me. I shall try to please everybody and have everything in readiness. However, it sometimes happens that I have to scold your generals ; for instance, this morning I received a letter dated yesterday in which General Chasseloup informed me that if he did not receive the money before October 1st he would not answer for what would happen. In my reply I avoided alluding to the expressions contained in his letter, for it is not the time to quarrel over trifles, but I reprimanded him for only giving me two days' notice. . . ."

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[1] *Archduke Karl of Austria* (1771–1847): a distinguished Austrian general, younger brother of Francis II, who in 1796 forced Jourdan and Moreau to beat a retreat; he was less successful when he had to deal with Napoleon, and he lost the battle of Wagram notwithstanding his bravery in 1809.

[2] *Chasseloup-Laubat*, François, comte de (1754-1833): came of an illustrious family of soldiers. He defended Montmédy against the Prussians, directed the attack against Maestricht, accompanied Bonaparte to Italy in 1796, besieged and took Peschiera, Mantua and Alexandria; besieged Danzig in 1807, and Stralsund; served during the Russian campaign, and was made count of the Empire by Napoleon. During the Restoration he became *pair de France* and marquis. He wrote some interesting memoirs.

Hitherto Masséna had refrained from resisting Austria's army of invasion owing to the fact that he had signed a treaty with the archduke Karl, by which he bound himself not to take the offensive. However, matters had got to such a pitch that, on October 8th, he wrote to inform Napoleon that he was breaking the said treaty and that he hoped, before many weeks had elapsed, to clear Italy of her invaders.

A week later Eugène learnt from his step-father that he was sending Jourdan to help him in the difficult task of clearing Italy of the Austrian troops, and at the same time he informed him of his victory over Mack[1] at Ulm. Eugène replied :

"MONZA, *October 15th*, 1805.

"Sire—Last night I received the good news of Your Majesty's first victory from M. Maret[2] and M. de Talleyrand.

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[1] *Mack*, Charles (1752–1828): a celebrated Austrian general, distinguished himself during many campaigns, notably during the campaign of the Netherlands against France in 1792 and 1793; in 1798, he was sent to Naples by the Emperor of Germany to command the Neapolitan army which was marching against France. He was beaten by Macdonald and Championnet and taken prisoner. While prisoner upon parole in Paris, he escaped. In 1805 he was besieged by Napoleon in Ulm and forced to surrender, together with his thirty thousand troops. He was condemned to death ; however, his sentence was commuted ; he was kept two years imprisoned in the fortress of Spielberg and liberated in 1819.

[2] *Maret*, Hugues Bernard (1763–1839): the son of a physician, began life as a lawyer, went to Versailles in 1789, where he edited the bulletins of the *Assemblée nationale*. When going to Naples to take up his post as ambassador in that city, he was captured by the Austrians and kept in prison until 1795, when he was exchanged for the daughter of Louis XVI. Napoleon made him his confidant ; he accompanied him on all his campaigns. He was made duc de Bassano in 1811. The Bourbons exiled him, but he returned to France in 1820. Louis-Philippe made him *pair de France* and thus won his support.

I immediately informed the municipal authorities of the same. I read the despatch this morning to the Council of State and to-morrow it shall be in all the newspapers.

" Masséna and his troops are longing to attack the enemy.

" The truce will be broken at midday to-day, and I do not think it will be long before they measure swords. As for me, Your Majesty does justice to my feelings ; you know how glad I am to have news of you. I study the maps and endeavour to follow on paper the great and wonderful movements of Your Majesty's army ; but I still regret that I am so far away. . . ."

Eugène was fated to get into hot water ; this time his step-father scolds him for some supposed indiscretion in showing his letters to people who had no business to see them :

" ELCHINGEN, *October 20th*, 1805.

" My Cousin—I am surprised to learn that the Imperial treasurer has been showing people some of my letters to you. It is all your fault ; you ought only to have sent him extracts from those letters. You must show my letters to nobody ; take care that this does not happen again."

Napoleon's next letter to his " cousin " contains a short account of his rapid successes in Austria :

" HAAG, NEAR WELS, *November 5th*, 1805.

" My Cousin—I am taking steps to stop the *armée d'Italie* pillaging : you yourself must make one or two examples. I am grateful to M. de Brême for keeping at his post ; a good statesman is necessary above all things. You will have seen in the bulletins that I have been at Salzburg and at Linz. When you get this letter I shall be within a few days' march of Vienna. The Russian troops are already showing signs of giving in. The cold here is very severe for the season ; the country is already covered with snow. Order *Te Deums* to be sung in all the churches in Italy as a thanksgiving for our success ; you can take your time about the matter, however, until the *armée d'Italie* has won a few more victories.

" I give you full power to supply the Minister of War with funds and to act for me in all matters. My hands are too full to attend to everything. Do your best according to your own views until I return to Paris. . . ."

At first the archduke Karl had tried to resist, but he was soon forced to beat a retreat from the province of Verona. One of the bravest soldiers among the Austrian troops was a Frenchman, a prince and a member of the de Rohan family: *Roi ne puis, duc ne daigne, Rohan suis.*

During the battle of Castelfranco, a French victory thanks to General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, the Prince de Rohan, although covered with wounds, refused to surrender until positively forced to do so. Eugène, on hearing of the prince's bravery, sent his own surgeon to attend to the prisoner's wounds and promised to allow him to return to Austria as soon as he was able to travel, provided that he would give him his word of honour not to fight against France again. It is doubtful whether the Emperor would have approved of this act of clemency; he would have probably kept him prisoner and meted out to him the same treatment which he had already meted out to a distant relative of the Prince de Rohan—the duc d'Enghien.

No sooner had General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, commander-in-chief of the *armée d'Italie,* left Naples in order to join Masséna and fight the Austrians, when the Neapolitans summoned the English and Russian fleets, then anchored off Corfu, to come and assist them repulse the French, should the latter be successful and desire to return to that town. On November 19th, twelve men-of-war, together with a number of transport-ships, entered the bay of Naples, and on the morrow the English and Russian troops, numbering twenty thousand men, landed and were quartered in Naples itself and in the neighbouring town of Portici.

Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch,[1] who was then in Rome and who had lately been given the title of count, on learning this news on November 23rd from a Neapolitan republican, hastened to inform Eugène's cousin, M. de Beauharnais, at that time Minister at Florence, of what had happened; before twenty-four hours had elapsed, the viceroy heard of the Neapolitans' treachery. He must have remembered his step-father's opinion of the Italian nation.

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[1] *Fesch,* Joseph (1763–1839): born at Ajaccio, uncle to Napoleon, was made archbishop of Lyons and then cardinal. He presided at the Council of Prelates in Paris in 1811.

Eugène took immediate measures to protect his kingdom from the enemy ; each of the four departments was ordered to furnish from five hundred to one thousand men, and a camp of national guards was formed at Bologna. With what pride Eugène now reviewed his troops outside the latter city on December 15th ! On the morrow he received the following letter from M. Alquier, French ambassador in Rome :

"ROME, *December 12th*, 1805.

"*Monseigneur*—I have just heard from a very sure source in Naples that, on December 9th, eight thousand Russian and English troops started in order to take up their position at San Germano and other places in the environs. A great number of Neapolitan troops have already started for Pescara and have reached the borders of the Abruzzi.

"M. de Damas[1] fills the position of quartermaster-general under the orders of M. de Lascy. The English remain independent under the command of General Craio. . . .

"A corps of special constables is being formed in Naples ; this corps, which is to number ten thousand members, is destined, under the command of the duke of Ascali, chief of the police force, to maintain order in the capital and its environs.

"M. de Lascy and the English Minister (Acton[1]) have promised the Queen that twenty-five thousand Russian and ten thousand English troops shall come to the rescue of the kingdom of Naples ; they added, however, that she must not expect these troops before next spring. . . .

"The Spanish chargé d'affaires informs me that all the French vessels moored in different parts of the two kingdoms have just been seized.

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[1] *Damas*, Roger, comte de (1765–1823): entered the French army at twelve years of age with the rank of officer, went to Russia, where he distinguished himself in the war against the Turks (1787). He then joined the *émigrés* and fought with them against his own country from 1793 to 1798, served under the King of Naples against the army of the Republic and beat a remarkable retreat in Calabria ; he returned to France with the Bourbons, and was made lieutenant-general and deputy (1815).

[2] *Acton*, Joseph (1737-1808): was born in France of an Irish father, first served in the French navy, then in Tuscany and in Naples, where he became the Queen of Naples' favourite; he was made Minister of the Marine by the King and given various other remunerative posts. His reign of glory came to an end in 1805 ; he died in Sicily in 1808.

"The French residents, terrified at the determined behaviour of the Court, and having learnt by certain bloody deeds in the past what to expect in the future, are leaving the kingdom, and great numbers of refugees have already arrived in Rome.

"News has reached Naples that rear-admiral Dumanoir, while withdrawing after the battle of Cadiz with the vessels which he had just captured, met a fleet of English ships bearing two infantry regiments bound for the kingdom of Naples, which fleet he promptly seized and took to a Spanish port...."

On December 18th, Eugène gave orders for his troops at Bologna to advance towards the Adige in the direction of Verona, so as to check the Tyrolese and leave the way open to other troops coming from Modena and Reggio.

The news of the battle of Austerlitz, called "the Battle of the Three Emperors," on account of the three Emperors who took part in it, and of the armistice of December 6th, was received by Eugène with mingled feelings of regret and pride. The signing of the Treaty of Presburg now put a stop to war in Italy—for the present, at least—and also to Eugène's dreams of winning fresh laurels for himself. However, he was somewhat consoled by the good news that his step-father, as a mark of his esteem and affection, had confided to him the post of commander-in-chief of the *armée d'Italie*. In future the Venetian States were to belong to the kingdom of Italy. As we have already seen, Eugène had experienced great difficulties during the last few months; the task of victualling the huge *armée d'Italie* in such a poverty-stricken country as Italy was arduous. Napoleon does not seem to have realized this fact; at all events, he expected Eugène to see that everything went straight and that nothing was wanting. But now Eugène was amply rewarded for all his trouble and anxiety. Never did an appointment give greater satisfaction to its receiver: was it not far better to be the commander of this vast army than to imagine himself a king, a king whose hands were always tied, who had to play second fiddle to an Emperor?

The viceroy, still viceroy but now content to be such, left Bologna and went to Padua on December 23rd, where he issued a proclamation informing the army that the Emperor had chosen him to be its commander-in-chief.

We will now turn aside from this record of political events and open a curious old book entitled *Les aides-de-camp de l'Empereur*, by Emile de Saint-Hilaire; there is not much information in it, as far as history goes, but it contains five or six authentic anecdotes connected with Napoleon's military career, which anecdotes have been pieced together and woven into two volumes of pleasant little tales, sentimental, old-fashioned, no doubt, but nevertheless interesting.

There had been some talk of a marriage between Eugène and the widowed queen of Etruria; the project had fallen through, however; the reason, perhaps, is contained in the following extract from the above-mentioned work, entitled " Ghiraldina ":

" A year had elapsed since Napoleon had made his stepson viceroy of Italy. Milan, overjoyed to have as governor a prince possessed of so many good qualities, had become a gay and prosperous city. . . . *Ghiraldina* only obeyed the instincts of her ardent Italian nature when she fell deeply in love with Eugène. Often did she say to herself:

" ' Why should I not become his wife? '

" Poor child! she forgot that, though princes have hearts, they cannot dispose of their hands in marriage. Napoleon had already chosen Eugène's companion from among the members of an old royal family; but, as Eugène shared *Ghiraldina's* illusions, he was in no hurry to obey his stepfather's behest.

" Besides the official communications existing between Paris and Milan, there was a secret correspondence kept up by the imperial police, in the meshes of whose huge web sovereigns and subjects alike were enveloped.

" A certain major quartered in Corsica received secret orders to go to Milan. He was one of the handsomest men in the army. He was not only high-born and handsome, but he was also clever and well educated. He knew the language and customs of Italy, where he had lived for a long time.

" On reaching Milan, he gave himself out as a victim of the Emperor. Eugène, who was slightly annoyed by Napoleon's determined desire to marry him against his will, condoled with the officer, whose position was not unlike his own, and promised to plead for him; meanwhile he gave him a post in his household. This was just what the handsome major wanted: the wolf was now in the sheep-fold. He did his very best to fascinate *Ghiraldina*, who at first only laughed at him, but little by little grew accustomed to his attentions. The major thereupon became still more attentive. He hinted to her that, sooner or later, she would be sacrificed to the Emperor's ambition; he pointed out to her the charms of an union based upon equality of rank, and at last persuaded her to elope with him. The preparations for their flight were made with the greatest secrecy. . . .

" One morning the viceroy was informed that Signora *Ghiraldina* had eloped with the major and that the couple had fled in the direction of Naples. . . . He believed the story and pursued them in hot haste. At each stage he was informed that a post-chaise containing a young Italian lady and a French gentleman had just passed by. . . .

" Eugène reached Naples before he was able to overtake the post-chaise. At last he perceived it turning the corner of a street—his heart told him that he had found the fugitives!

" A moment later the carriage entered the courtyard of an *hôtel*. The Prince rushed forward, lifted the veil concealing the features of the faithless fair one, and fell back overcome with dismay: the travellers were not *Ghiraldina* and the major!

" The young lady settled her bonnet on her head and asked the gentleman who had treated her so cavalierly:

" ' Are you not the viceroy of Italy? '

" Before the Prince could reply, she handed him a letter. Eugène broke the seal and glanced at the signature: it bore the major's name.

" ' *Monseigneur*—I trust Your Highness will pardon me; I have only acted in your interest. By proving to you that this woman is unworthy of your love, I restore to the Emperor his adopted son.'

" Disappointment, combined with exhaustion, sufficed to remind the Prince of his dignity. In short, after a few hours' sleep, he returned to Milan and two months later became the happy husband of the Princess Amelia, daughter of the King of Bavaria.

"The major and his conquest had hidden themselves meanwhile in the suburbs of Milan in order to escape punishment; it was *Ghiraldina's* maid who had played the rôle of her mistress in the post-chaise when it started for Naples. The two lovers soon learnt in their retreat that the Prince had forgiven them; they then went to Florence. There they gave themselves out to be husband and wife, but it was *Ghiraldina's* fate never to be united to any of her lovers by the bonds of holy matrimony. . . .

"One evening, during carnival-time, the major left to join his regiment, abandoning his Ariadne in the middle of a ball. *Ghiraldina* learnt from a masquerader the full extent of her misfortune. At first she thought her informant was joking; and, in fact, she imagined she could recognize her lover's costume at the other end of the ball-room; but the wearer was a friend of the major, who had commissioned him to keep up the illusion until the conclusion of the festivity.

"*Ghiraldina* finally resigned herself to her fate. She carefully collected the jewels which Eugène had given her and went to Leghorn, where she opened a milliner's shop in order to support herself; and when misfortune and sorrow came to the viceroy of Italy, when he was defending the country which had been confided to his care, he received from an anonymous donor a considerable sum of money for his soldiers. It was *Ghiraldina* who thus returned to him the presents she had once received from him.

"Eugène was visiting the field-hospital on the morrow of a great battle. Among the wounded soldiers was a young man who had fought most bravely and heroically. On beholding the Prince, the wounded warrior tried, notwithstanding his weakness, to avert his face; but a groan escaped from his lips, and this groan awoke an echo in the viceroy's heart. He quickly went up to the bed upon which the young man lay, pushed aside the slender white hands with which the latter had tried to cover his face, and in a voice choked with emotion cried: 'Ghiraldina!'

"Tears gushed from Eugène's eyes and fell upon the unfortunate woman's forehead.

"'I thank Thee, O my God!' cried she; 'I thank Thee! To think that he should shed tears for me! . . . I do not deserve such happiness!'"

CHAPTER VI

Eugène is ordered to marry the princess Augusta-Amelia of Bavaria—He starts for Munich—Napoleon adopts him as his son—The marriage is celebrated—Some wedding guests—Napoleon's affection for his adopted daughter—The happy pair start for Italy—The welcome to the new home—Love of the Milanese for their vice-reine—Napoleon's opinion of the Catholic clergy—He pays a visit to his adopted son and his bride—Eugène conducts his Court on the lines of common sense.

AFTER the victory of Austerlitz, Napoleon returned to Schönbrunn, from whence he wrote to Josephine telling her to come and join him at Munich, the capital of the electorate of Bavaria. As this country had suffered considerably during the wars of the Revolution, and as Bavaria had been deprived of her possessions along the left bank of the Rhine by the Treaty of Lunéville, Napoleon determined to make the electorate into a kingdom as compensation and as a reward to the Elector[1] for having furnished him with troops on various occasions. By the Treaty of Presburg Bavaria obtained part of the Tyrol, a valuable possession to her.

For some time past Napoleon had been looking about for a suitable wife for his step-son; the marriage with the widowed queen of Etruria, as we have already seen, had never been anything more than a project. Napoleon, knowing that the Elector Maximilian-Joseph had some unmarried daughters, determined to pay a visit to Munich, place the crown of Bavaria upon the Elector's head with his own hands and take a look at the young ladies to see whether

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[1] *Maximilian-Joseph* (1756–1825): first Elector, then King of Bavaria; as France's ally he received Ulm, Würzburg, Bamberg, Augsburg, Nordlingen, and twelve other smaller towns. The Treaty of Presburg in 1805 gave him part of the Tyrol and Austrian Suabia together with Breisgau and the title of King of Bavaria. Maxmilian approved of the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806, and three years later received Salzburg and Braunau. However, the fact that he owed so much to Napoleon's generosity did not prevent him joining the league against France in 1813. He was allowed to keep his new possessions after the fall of his benefactor.

(Photo: Stuffler Munich)

MAXIMILIAN-JOSEPH, KING OF BAVARIA

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one of them would make a suitable wife for Eugène. Now, one of the Elector's daughters, Augusta-Amelia by name, was at that time engaged to be married to her favourite cousin, Prince Charles of Baden. The portrait of this princess has been painted by many artists, but one and all agree that she was as near perfection as it is possible to be. She was fit, by her beauty, talents and by more durable qualities, to be the companion of the young Bayard. Mlle. Avrillon says of her :

"The Princess Augusta was very gentle and very amiable, and, what was more, remarkably handsome. An indescribable charm emanated from this sweet young girl who was not yet eighteen years of age. . . . She was very tall, well shaped and as slender as a nymph. She was gifted with a natural dignity which made everybody respect her ; her face was more handsome than pretty, and her complexion was remarkably fresh, although perhaps a trifle highly coloured. But the most pleasing thing about her was the air of kindness which won the love of everybody who had the honour of her acquaintance. These advantages were not all natural ; education had done much for her ; she had been brought up with extreme simplicity, and she always dressed remarkably plainly."

This piece of perfection won Napoleon's approval.

The Princess must have thought something dreadful was about to happen when, on Christmas Day, 1805, the happiest day in all the year in German-speaking countries, she received the following extraordinary letter from her father. From the fact that, although dwelling under the same roof as his daughter, he chose to impart his commands to her by letter rather than by word of mouth, we may be allowed to suppose that he was somewhat ashamed of his conduct :

"Could I see the slightest chance of your marrying Charles, Prince of Baden, I would not go down upon my knees, my dear, beloved Augusta, and beg you to give him up. Still less would I urge you, my dear one, to bestow your hand upon the future King of Italy if this crown were not guaranteed by all the European powers by the conclusion of the Treaty of Presburg and if I were not convinced that Prince Eugène possesses sterling good qualities and that he can make you happy. You may thank the *clique* of Prince X and Mme. H—— for the fact that your marriage with Prince Charles has never come off. Remember, my dear child, that you will not only make your father happy, but your brothers and Bavaria also will rejoice to see this union. One proof that it is a good marriage lies in the fact that the baron von Thugut,[1] the Austrian Prime Minister, who, unluckily for us, has returned to the head of affairs, began by proposing the Emperor's[2] eldest daughter. It grieves me to wound your feelings, my dear, but I count upon your affection and upon the attachment you have always shown towards your father, and I am sure you do not wish to poison his last remaining days. Remember, dear Augusta, that a refusal would make the Emperor quite as bitter an enemy as he has hitherto been a kind friend to our house.

" Spare me the grief of an explanation which might prove too much for my feeble constitution.

" *Write* me your reply, or else tell your brother your decision. You may be sure, dear friend, that it is very painful to me to have to write to you in this manner ; but our more than desperate position and my duty towards the country which Providence has given me to govern force me to act thus. God knows that I only desire your welfare and that nobody in the world loves you more than your faithful father and best friend."

It is not surprising to learn that the hand which wrote this letter, when disaster fell upon France, forgot to whom it owed its advancement. The reward for this ingratitude was scarcely worth mentioning : Maximilian was allowed to keep his title of king and the land which Napoleon had given him. Neither is it surprising to learn that this scheming papa, notwithstanding his " feeble constitution," lived for twenty years after writing the above letter. We rather suspect that he, like Emerson's heroine Elsie, " had caught cold coming into the world and had always increased it since."

No historian seems to have thought it worth his while to tell us what the Princess suffered on reading this brutal letter; yet she, judging from her model conduct as a wife and a mother, must have had a heart as capable of suffering as the poorest of her father's subjects.

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[1] *Thugut*, Franz Maria, baron von (1734–1818) : although the son of humble fisher-folk, rose by his talents to be Ambassador and Austrian Prime Minister. He was a sworn enemy to France.

[2] The Emperor of Austria.

She replied the same day:

"My very dear and affectionate father, they force me to break the promise I had given to Prince Charles. I will consent, though it costs me much to do so, if the repose of a beloved parent and the happiness of a nation are dependent thereon.

"I put my fate into your hands; though my lot may seem cruel to me, it will be softened by the knowledge that I have sacrificed myself for my father, my family and my country. I ask your blessing on my bended knees; it will help me to bear my sad fate with resignation."

And so it was that the marriage which had been on the *tapis* ever since the month of October and for which M. de Talleyrand, by his approbation, was in some measure answerable, was "arranged"—a particularly felicitous term in this case. The Empress Josephine, overjoyed at the thought that her son Eugène de Beauharnais was about to marry a real princess, hastened to Munich, where she arrived a few days before her husband.

Napoleon arrived on December 30th, and on the morrow crowned the Elector King of Bavaria. He then acquainted the Senate of the fact that he now adopted Eugène as his son and that he was about to marry him to the daughter of Maximilian-Joseph, the newly made king. He also wrote the following letter to his brother Joseph, telling him of Eugène's marriage and of one or two other unions which he was anxious to arrange for different members of his family:

"MUNICH, *December* 31*st*, 1805.

"My Brother—I have asked for the hand of the Princess Augusta, daughter of the Elector of Bavaria, who is a very pretty creature, for Prince Eugène: the marriage is now arranged. I have also asked for the hand of another princess for Jérôme; as you were the last to see him, let me know if I can count upon that young man to do as I wish. I have also arranged a marriage for your eldest daughter with a little prince who will be a great prince some day. As the latter marriage will not take place for several months, I shall have time to discuss the matter with you. Please inform Mama of Eugène's marriage with Princess Augusta ; I do not wish the subject to be discussed in public. . . ."

Now, although this marriage afforded much satisfaction to the bride's father, such was not the case with his wife ; this lady—his second wife, whom he had married some years after the death of Augusta's mother—was strongly opposed to the match. Although the Queen of Bavaria was not exactly handsome, she was graceful and had perfect manners. With this lady the Emperor employed his well-earned holiday by trying to get up a flirtation ; but his attentions met with little response. However, Josephine, who was beginning to imagine she saw a rival in every member of her own sex, was sufficiently alarmed by what she noticed to wish to get away from Munich as soon as Eugène's marriage had been celebrated. She had another grievance : the Emperor had refused to allow her daughter Hortense to come to Munich for her brother's marriage.

And there was yet another person who did not look with favour upon the projected union, and that person was the wife of the landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt,[1] who, in a letter to the King of Bavaria, actually dared to speak of it as *a horrible marriage*, for which offence the Emperor very nearly deprived her husband of his possessions ; but Maximilian having interceded for the innocent landgrave, he got off with a very mild sentence—Napoleon sent some of his many troops to occupy Hesse-Darmstadt for some months.

We must now return to Milan, where Eugène was awaiting his step-father's summons to come and claim the bride whom he had never seen. In the following missive the Emperor orders him to start for Munich as soon as possible :

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[1] *Louis X*, landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt: in 1801 was deprived of part of his possessions, including a portion of the province of Lichtenberg and some lands on the left bank of the Rhine, receiving as compensation the duchy of Westphalia, Mayence and a part of the Palatinate. On joining the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806, he exchanged his title of landgrave to that of grand-duke and took the name of Louis I. In 1813, he turned against France ; two years later he gave Prussia his possessions in Westphalia and received some territory along the banks of the Rhine in exchange. In 1816 he restored to the landgraves of Hesse-Homburg the sovereignty of which they had been deprived in 1806. In 1820 he gave his subjects a Constitution founded upon fairly liberal lines.

"My Cousin—I am now in Munich. I have arranged your marriage with Princess Augusta. The banns have been published. The Princess paid me a visit this morning, when we had a long conversation together. She is very pretty. You will find her portrait on the cup which I now send you; however, she is much prettier than her portrait."

Three days after the arrival of the cup mentioned in the above letter, Eugène received another missive from his benefactor:

"My Cousin—You must start for Munich not later than twelve hours after receiving this letter. Try to get here as quickly as possible, so that you may find me still here. You must leave your command in the hands of some capable and trustworthy general. It is unnecessary for you to bring a numerous suite. Start at once, and travel incognito in order to run fewer risks and travel quicker. Send me a messenger to announce your arrival twenty-four hours before you expect to do so.

"P.S.—One hour after receiving this letter, send me a messenger to say which day you expect to arrive."

The above letter is remarkable for the fact that in it Napoleon calls Eugène his "cousin" for the last time—in future he was to be his "son," until the birth of the eaglet caused the proud father to forget that the faithful Eugène had ever borne that precious name.

Eugène, now in possession of the Venetian States and reassured as to any further disturbances in Italy for the time being, wrote to his step-father announcing his departure:

"*January 6th*, 1806.

"Sire—I hasten to inform Your Majesty that I have just received your letter in which I learn that I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you again. It is now eight o'clock in the morning, and I shall start at eight o'clock to-night. By Friday at the latest I hope to assure Your Majesty in person of my gratitude. I have chosen General Miollis[1] to command during my absence; but, as he is still at Mantua, I am now going to write him my full instructions upon matters concerning the army and the government of the country."

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[1] *Miollis*, Alexandre-François (1759–1828): fought in America under Rochambeau, commanded the volunteers of the Bouches-du-Rhone in 1792, was made brigadier-general in 1795, distinguished himself in Italy and was ordered to occupy Tuscany after the treaty of Campo-Formio (1797). In 1806 he was Governor of Mantua, where he erected an obelisk to Virgil, who was born near that city. In 1807 he occupied Rome and remained there until 1814.

It is not usually the custom for the bridegroom's relations to tell one another what they ought to give the happy pair as a wedding-present nor how much the said presents ought to cost; but that was what Napoleon, who was always doing extraordinary things, did in a letter written to his sister-in-law, the wife[1] of Joseph Bonaparte:

"MUNICH, *January 6th*, 1806.

"Madame my sister-in-law, for some time past I have been arranging a marriage between my son Prince Eugène and Princess Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria. The Elector of Ratisbon, the archchancellor of the Empire,[2] marries them at Munich on January 15th, which ceremony will detain me in this town for a few days longer.

"The Princess Augusta is one of the most beautiful and the most perfect members of her sex. I think it would be a good thing if you were to give her a wedding-present costing from fifteen to twenty thousand francs. She will leave here on January 20th in order to go to Italy. The King of Bavaria will write to inform you of the marriage. Herewith I pray God, Madame my sister-in-law, to have you in His holy keeping.

"NAPOLEON."

On the morrow, January 10th, Eugène reached Munich. Hardly had he set foot in the capital of the new kingdom, when Napoleon sent for him, made him sit down in his study and ordered him to shave off his whiskers, lest his martial appearance should frighten the charming bride

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[1] Joseph married Julie Clary, the daughter of a tradesman in Marseilles, by whom he had two daughters: Julie (1801–54), who married her cousin, Charles Lucien, prince de Canino; and Charlotte (1802–39), who married Charles Louis, the son of Hortense and Louis Bonaparte.

[2] *Dalberg*, Charles, baron von (1745–1817): prince-primate of the Catholic Church in Germany. He began his career as governor of Erfurt, and in 1802 he became elector of Mayence, bishop of Ratisbon, and archchancellor of the Empire. He presided at the last diet in Germany; at first opposed to Napoleon, he eventually went over to the Emperor's side and proved a faithful friend. Appointed president of the Confederation of the Rhine and grand-duke of Frankfort, he chose Eugène de Beauharnais to succeed him in the latter post. Remaining faithful to the Emperor's cause after Napoleon's downfall, he was despoiled of part of his possessions, but allowed to keep his bishopric. He was the author of several learned works.

AUGUSTA-AMELIA, WIFE OF EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS

From the portrait at Drottningholm. By kind permission of Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Co.

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whose acquaintance he still had to make. And this was how it was that, instead of paying his first visit to his mother, as he would have liked to have done, he had to listen to his step-father's jokes concerning his whiskers, of which he was probably immensely proud. Josephine, always ready to take offence, burst into tears on learning that her son had arrived in Munich and had not come to see her immediately. She was still in a state of tearfulness when Napoleon came into her room and, pushing Eugène before him, said :

" Here, *Madame,* I've brought you your great booby of a son ! "

We search Eugène's memoirs in vain for any account of his first meeting with the woman who was in some measure his counterpart and assuredly worthy to be his companion on life's journey. However, all Eugène's biographers agree that it was a case of love at first sight, a *coup de foudre,* which was not, as so often happens, merely a flash in the pan, but a sincere and durable affection.

The marriage was celebrated in the royal chapel on January 14th, 1806. The capital was brilliantly illuminated and the town-hall was decorated with the initials A and E in letters of fire surrounded by the words *Corona Virtuti* and suitable allegorical subjects. For a whole week Munich was given up to public rejoicings. The King of Bavaria invited all the crowned heads he could think of to witness his daughter's marriage with the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte's adopted son. Among his numerous guests was the duke of Würtemberg,[1] so remarkable for his obesity.

Constant gives an amusing account of what he saw at Munich :

" Besides the heads which he had crowned with his own hand, the Emperor, while in Bavaria, met a number of princes and princesses belonging to the Confederation ; these guests usually dined with his Majesty. I noticed, among this crowd of royal courtiers, the prince-primate, who, as far as manners, costume and appearance went, differed in no way from the very best of his kind in Paris. But I cannot say the same of the toilets of the princesses, duchesses and other noble ladies, most of whom displayed the very worst taste. Their heads were loaded with the ugliest creations made of flowers, feathers, ribbons, gold or silver lace and, above all, quantities of diamond-headed pins. The German nobility drove about in great heavy chariots which had to be very big in order to contain the enormous hoops which these ladies still wore. This fidelity to past fashions was all the more astonishing because Germany, at that time, had the valuable advantage of possessing two fashion papers. . . . To these wretched chariots, which resembled our old stage-coaches, very scraggy steeds were harnessed with ropes ; so far away were the horses from the vehicles that they could only turn round in very wide places."

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[1] *Frederick II*, duke of Würtemberg: was, in the year 1806, given the title of king by Napoleon, whereupon he called himself Frederick I, king of Würtemberg ; his domains were considerably increased by the Emperor's generosity.

The marriage settlement had been drawn up by that astute statesman M. de Maret (the duc de Bassano) ; this document had to undergo many alterations before everybody was content ; after having made over to the Princess a dowry drawn from the duchy of Parma, Napoleon changed his mind and promised to settle another and more suitable appanage upon the vice-reine. As was to be expected when so many persons, all equally anxious not to be slighted, were gathered together, many little disputes broke out among the guests. Mme. Murat, for instance, very nearly spoilt everything by her jealousy of the Princess Augusta, whom Napoleon, two days after the marriage ceremony, publicly adopted together with Eugène, to whom he gave the name of *Eugène Napoleon of France.* Naturally, Augusta, as a bride and as vice-reine, had precedence of Mme. Murat at the numerous fêtes which took place at the Bavarian Court. In order to avoid having to swallow this "affront," as she called it, Mme. Murat feigned illness. The Emperor was obliged to show his temper before he could bring his sister to a sense of propriety—civility was out of the question. The act of adoption of Eugène by the Emperor was proclaimed at Milan in due time, and two months later a decree was issued stating that the heir-apparent to the crown of Italy would in future bear the title of Prince of Venice.

Eugène, even according to his enemy Marmont—of whom a witty woman once said, *à propos* of his posthumous memoirs, that "he lay in wait behind his own tombstone in order to fire upon his enemies, who could not retaliate"—was a good young fellow at that time, "rather narrow-minded, but sensible in many things; his talent as a soldier was mediocre; he did not lack courage. His relations with Napoleon had developed his faculties; he had acquired those easy manners which important duties exercised in early life always give; but he was far from possessing the talent necessary for the rôle which had been entrusted to him." Elsewhere the same author says:

"He had just married a Bavarian princess of great beauty, a pattern of female virtue and docility. One must be peculiarly favoured by Fortune to meet such a woman, so accomplished in every way, when one makes a political marriage. Eugène performed his duties most zealously. . . ."

Two days after the marriage the young couple started for the country which was to be their home for the next few years. The Emperor seems to have taken a fancy to the young princess from their very first interview. He often wrote to his "daughter," as he called her; we will now reproduce the first of those letters:

"STUTTGARD, *January* 17th, 1806.

"My Daughter—The letter which you have just written me is as amiable as yourself. The affection which I bear for you will only increase as time passes; I realize that fact from the pleasure which I experience when I remember all your good qualities and by the need I feel of being assured by you that you are contented and that your husband makes you happy. In the midst of all my occupations, I shall always endeavour to make it my business to ensure happiness to my children. Believe me, Augusta, I love you as a father loves his daughter, and I expect you to love me as a daughter ought to love her father. Take care of your health on the journey as well as in the new home to which you are going; rest whenever you feel the need of it. You have had a great deal to excite you during the last month. Remember that I do not wish you to fall ill. . . ."

The Empress Josephine was more than gratified to see that her husband still continued to display an interest in her son's future. It was about this time that she wrote

Eugène the following letter congratulating him on his stepfather's affection for him :

> "... Though Fortune continues to shower her favours upon you, I know that you will not allow your good luck to make you proud. The man who listens to the voice of his conscience is well protected. In acting thus, you show yourself the worthy son of him whose features you bear, whose conduct and principles you imitate. In the days of misfortune he was able to be brave because, in happier times, he had been thoroughly upright. The memory of a spotless life can sweeten the bitterness of death ; it sheds a halo of glory over the memory of an honest man. And such are you, my son ; as earthly grandeur does not tempt you, it is powerless to corrupt you. In the midst of honours and opulence, you will remember those days at Fontainebleau when you were poor, fatherless, abandoned ; but you will remember only to stretch forth a compassionate hand towards the unfortunate. I am delighted to learn that your young wife thinks as you do on the matter ; and as I have always wished you two to be of one mind, my mother's heart rejoices at this news. I embrace you both."

In obedience to the Emperor's wish, the young couple went a little tour of inspection of some of the principal towns in Italy before settling down at Milan. Their first important halt was at Verona, where they arrived January 25th, and where they found their whole Court waiting to welcome them. The Princess was introduced to her new subjects, and all agreed that she was the most charming vice-reine imaginable.

After remaining in Verona for a few days, passed in attending to business which had accumulated during his absence, Eugène and his young bride went on to Venice, where they were accorded a truly royal welcome (February 3rd, 1806).

"The viceroy and the vice-reine on leaving their carriage," says Baron Darnay, "found on the banks of the first lagunes a deputation composed of twelve of the most notable men in Venice waiting to escort them thither. Two small boats accompanied their Majesties' boat, which was adorned with all the luxury an Eastern mind could imagine. Silken stuffs, gold and silver lace, embroidery, plumes and feathers were seen everywhere; flowers and aromatic perfumes were scattered on every side; numerous rowers, clad in silk garments, steered this magnificent barge with majestic movements. The two other vessels, equally decorated, followed it.

"Thousands of little barks, freshly painted for the occasion, rowed round and round these three vessels; several were filled with musicians who performed different airs or blew flourishes on trumpets. Long and elegant gondolas, each manned by twelve gondoliers clad in different coloured silk costumes, rowed to and fro. The sound of drums, cymbals and cannons was wafted from the shore. The journey, which lasted nearly an hour, was enlivened by cries of joy and affection. . . ."

The Emperor had now returned to his good town of Paris, where he immediately set about finishing his task of providing with suitable titles and possessions those of his relatives who were not content with what they had. But he found it a more difficult matter to please these amateur kings and princes than to conquer kingdoms for them.

The comte Miot de Mélito reproduces in his memoirs a conversation which he had during the month of January with Napoleon:

"The Emperor, whom I saw at the Tuileries on the morrow, told me not to start until I had seen him again, and to come and assist at his toilette next morning. I therefore went there on January 30th at nine o'clock; after having made me enter his study, he conversed with me for some time. I will here reproduce a summary of this conversation, the last I had with him during the time of his prosperity.

"'You are going to see my brother Joseph,' said he; 'you must tell him that I am about to make him King of Naples, that he shall keep the title of grand-elector and that I shall alter nothing concerning his relations with France. But warn him that the least trace of uncertainty, the slightest hesitation upon his part, will be fatal to him. I have somebody else in my mind's eye if he holds back. I shall call that person *Napoleon;* he shall be my son. It was my brother Joseph's conduct at Saint-Cloud and his refusal of the crown of Italy which made me adopt Eugène as my son. I have determined to give the throne of Naples to somebody else if he tries my patience too much. Family affection must give way to politics. I only consider as my relations those persons who serve me faithfully. My fortunes do not depend upon the name of *Bonaparte*, but upon the name of *Napoleon*. I create children with my fingers' ends and with my pen. I can no longer love those whom I do not esteem. . . .' "

Was it because he had ceased to esteem Josephine that he no longer loved her? Poor Napoleon and poor Josephine!

We may be allowed to believe from the sentence in the above letter, " I have somebody else in my mind's eye. . . . I shall call that person *Napoleon;* he shall be my son," and from the fact that Eugène, on his adoption, received the title of *Eugène Napoleon of France*, that the Emperor really had serious intentions about this time of making Eugène his heir.

Eugène was soon to incur his adoptive father's anger again; on this occasion he got a good scolding for extravagance, a fault which he had inherited from his mother, but which he managed to cure during his reign as viceroy.

In a letter from Paris, dated February 3rd, 1806, Napoleon says:

" My son, you have managed your affairs very badly in Paris. I have just been given a bill for one million five hundred thousand francs, representing works executed in your *hôtel* here; it is a huge sum. MM. Calmelet, Bataille, and the little steward whom you engaged are nothing but a pack of thieves; I can see they have made such a muddle of the whole affair that it will be impossible to avoid paying very heavily. It pains me to see this; I thought you were more orderly. You should never do anything without an estimate and a promise from your architect not to exceed that estimate. You have done just the opposite; the architect has had his own way in everything; huge sums of money have been thrown into the gutter. I have commissioned Berthier to look into the affair. Be more careful over such matters in Italy; architects are the same all the world over."

Two more letters, much in the same strain, followed on the morrow :

"PARIS, *February 4th*, 1806.

"My Son—The Italians make use of very improper expressions in their addresses to you ; they do not weigh their words, and words should always be weighed. The only thing to do is to avoid printing their addresses. I wish you to adopt this as a rule."

"PARIS, *February 4th*, 1806.

"My Son—I am astonished that you tell me nothing about your journey, nor as to what has happened in the Tyrol. Your wife has been more thoughtful than you. However, I wish you to write to me from time to time, so that I may know where you are, whither you are going, and what you are about, how you get on with your wife and if you love and esteem her."

In order to exonerate himself from the accusation of extravagance and to acquaint the Emperor of his movements, Eugène writes from Brescia, where he stopped for a day or two before going on to Milan :

"BRESCIA, *February 12th*, 1806.

"Sire—Your Majesty has sent me two despatches which have wounded me deeply. You say that you are vexed that so much money has been spent over my *hôtel* in Paris. Your Majesty will probably remember that I have not been in Paris for a long time and that, neglectful of my own affairs, I have given myself up to my duties, having no other ambition than to obey and please you. During all the time I was in the capital I regulated my expenditure according to the allowance which I owed to Your Majesty's kindness. The works had already been begun when Your Majesty deigned to make me a prince of the Empire. I have now sent one of my aides-de-camp to Paris, charging him to bring me back a full and particular account of what I owe ; the amount, five months ago, was exactly what it is to-day, that is to say : I still owe from eight to nine hundred thousand *livres*. I myself made a great fuss over the sum, but it was too late to stop the works, which were nearly completed ; in order to pay for these works, I determined to relinquish my salary as a French prince, that salary which

Your Majesty has the kindness to allow me out of your privy purse. While in Munich, I mentioned the matter to the Empress and begged her to obtain from Your Majesty, if possible before the month of May, the whole of my salary for 1806, so that, on my arrival in Paris, I might pay off all my debts. I have since learnt that Your Majesty, thinking that I had been cheated, has withdrawn your favours from several persons. It is my duty to tell Your Majesty that, as far as I am concerned, MM. Calmelet and Soulanger, together with my architect, are quite blameless. I have known these gentlemen for many years, and the interest which they displayed in my family in less happy days emboldens me to beg Your Majesty not to be hard upon them.

" The second reproach contained in Your Majesty's letter is too kindly meant for me to try to exonerate myself ; I dare to trust that you will interpret my reserve in the most favourable manner. I am happy, Sire, with the companion whom I owe to your fatherly affection ; she is gentle, amiable and good ; she is especially grateful for the kindness which she has received at your hands, and she will make it a pleasure to continue to deserve your affection."

The young couple reached Milan on the morrow. The fact that Italy was now free from the Austrian yoke, combined with the belief that Eugène was destined to be her future king, accounted for the truly royal welcome which the Milanese accorded to their viceroy and his young bride. But they did not always show their enthusiasm in a very wise manner, as when, for instance, during a gala performance at the Opera-house, the illustrious couple were represented seated upon Olympus surrounded by genii chanting their praises while the actors and actresses knelt at their feet. This ridiculous scene aroused indignation in Eugène's breast ; he sent word by a chamberlain that it was reserved to the Almighty Being to receive homage, and that it was very unseemly for men to go down upon their knees before their fellow-creatures.

And yet, notwithstanding these outward signs of affection, there were many who secretly chafed under the French rule. Mme. de Rémusat says :

" Notwithstanding Prince Eugène's gentle and equitable rule, the Italians soon perceived that the conquest had given them a master, Napoleon, who appropriated for his own use the resources furnished by their beautiful land. They were obliged to support a foreign army at their own expense. The largest portion of their revenue was sent to enrich the French nation. In everything concerning the government less care was taken of their interests than of those of the great empire whose welfare was dependent upon the success of the ambitious plans of one man, who was not ashamed to force Italy to make sacrifices which he would not have dared to require of France. The viceroy often pleaded for the Italians, but he was seldom attended to. However, at first the Italians did justice to his character and really believed that he was not responsible for the severity which he was obliged to observe ; they were grateful to him for wishing and for trying to protect them, until Bonaparte becoming more and more exacting, the downtrodden people, unable to endure any longer, included all the French, with Prince Eugène at their head, in their hatred of the Emperor. I myself heard the viceroy, who always served Bonaparte most faithfully, although he was well aware of his faults, tell his mother that the Emperor, jealous of the affection showed by the Italians to his step-son, had purposely ordered him to oppress them in order to alienate the nation's affection, because he was afraid of what might happen if they grew too fond of Eugène.

" The vice-reine also helped to win the people to her husband's side. Beautiful, eminently virtuous and charitable, she delighted everybody who came near her. She kept Bonaparte at a distance by her somewhat reserved air and very refined manners. He did not like to hear her praised. She seldom came to Paris."

With all due respect to Mme. de Rémusat, we cannot agree with her as to the relations which existed between Napoleon and his step-son's wife. Mme. de Rémusat is not fair to either. Do we not find in a letter written to Eugène's bride only a few weeks after her marriage that the Emperor tells her that the Empress will soon send her the latest Paris fashions, advises her to read so as to store her mind with useful knowledge, and begs her to be kind to his subjects and to his soldiers ? His letter concludes with these words : " Let your purse be always open to the wives and children of the latter. You can do nothing which will give me greater pleasure or touch me more deeply."

A few days later he sends her some books for her library, and a work-basket with this message : " Tell Eugène how I love him and how glad I am to hear that you are both so happy."

It is scarcely to be wondered at that the Princess did not often go to Paris. She had two excellent reasons for not wishing to be a frequent visitor at the Tuileries : first, her duties as vice-reine and then as a mother soon forbade her leaving home very often ; and secondly, she dreaded lest the enmity of the Bonapartes for anybody connected with Eugène should spoil her husband's visits to his adoptive father's Court.

Napoleon's letters to his " daughter " contradict Mme. de Rémusat's assertions as to his indifference for the welfare of the Italian people, his compatriots, as we can almost term them, for Napoleon, in many ways, was more Italian than French—in character, in physiognomy, in his likes and dislikes, in his love for bright colours and rich stuffs, in his fondness for Italian music, in his devotion to his family, although the latter virtue is quite as common among the French as among the Italians. In one thing, however, he did not resemble the Italians, for he had none of their blind faith in the clergy which has helped that unhappy nation to endure many of its troubles. The following letter shows in what esteem Napoleon, the restorer of the Catholic faith in France, held the clergy of that country :

" PARIS, *February 17th*, 1806.

" My Son—Let me know your opinion concerning those persons to whom I had better distribute certain bishoprics now vacant. We must give them to those priests who have served me faithfully ; it is no good hunting up old cardinals who, if the occasion ever arose, would be only too glad to leave me in the lurch. . . ."

In his next letter, Napoleon tells Eugène that he has dismissed M. Calmelet, the witness at his marriage with Josephine, for whom the viceroy had pleaded :

"PARIS, *February 18th*, 1806.

"My Son—I can neither trust M. Calmelet nor your architect. It is ridiculous for them to say that one million five hundred thousand francs have been spent upon such a small house as yours is; the works which have been executed are not worth a quarter of that sum. Be careful to do nothing without a proper estimate; however, do not worry about your *hôtel*, I will attend to the matter. You shall stay with me when you come to Paris."

But Napoleon was to go to Italy before Eugène brought his young wife to visit the gay capital. Napoleon now announced his intention of coming to see how Eugène was governing:

"PARIS, *February 19th*, 1806.

"My Son—Take care that your store of siege-provisions is not wasted. Do not have any biscuit made in Venice; I have plenty in Mantua and in other Italian towns. Have a certain amount conveyed to Palmanova. . . . Take care that the supply in Naples is not wasted; I shall make very strict investigations on the occasion of my next visit to Italy, which may be soon. I intend to travel post with one aide-de-camp and a valet; I suppose that I shall find carriages and horses at Milan."

We are again reminded in Napoleon's next letter of what Mme. de Rémusat says concerning his treatment of his Italian subjects:

"PARIS, *February 28th*, 1806.

"My Son—Aldini will send you the scheme for a decree freeing my kingdom of Italy from any indebtedness to France. Remember that I require a great deal of money; recollect that, at the present moment, my army numbers five hundred and ten thousand troops, and that I have ordered huge sums of money to be expended upon my navy, that I am going to increase my army by one hundred thousand men and that I am about to tax France more heavily. As for my *armée d'Italie*, you may be quite sure that those who assert that Venice can only furnish eight million *lire* are imbeciles. I know Venice better than they do; she yielded Austria twenty-five millions, and she ought to yield still more in my hands. If you look into the matter, you will see that I am right. . . ."

Less than two months after her own marriage, Augusta learnt from the postscript of a letter from the Emperor to her husband that her ex-fiancé was about to marry Eugène's pretty, sprightly cousin, Mlle. Stéphanie de Beauharnais :

" P.S.—Tell Augusta that the marriage of Stéphanie de Beauharnais, whom I have adopted as my daughter, is arranged ; that I am expecting the Prince of Baden to-morrow, and that the marriage will be celebrated immediately. Stéphanie is very pretty, and the Prince of Baden is quite pleased with his bride, as is the margrave,[1] who, since I paid him a visit, has behaved properly towards me."

Did Augusta's heart beat a little quicker at the news that the man whom she had once looked upon as her future husband was about to marry another woman ?

We find in Constant's memoirs an account of a remarkable speech made by the Emperor on the occasion of his visit to Venice, which took place early in the month of March, 1806 :

" The prince viceroy and the grand marshal assisted at the Emperor's toilette on that particular evening ; while the latter was being undressed, I overheard part of the conversation, which was chiefly concerning the government of Venice before the Venetian Republic became united to the French Empire. His Majesty did nearly all the talking ; Prince Eugène and Marshal Duroc contented themselves with putting in a word here and there, as if to furnish the Emperor with fresh topics and thus prolong the conversation, a one-sided one, it is true, for His Majesty always liked to be cock of the walk and never left anybody else much chance to hold forth. . . .

" On this occasion His Majesty discoursed of the Venetian States, and I learnt far more from what he said than I could have learnt from any history book. The viceroy having remarked that some of the patricians regretted their liberty, the Emperor exclaimed : ' Liberty ? fiddle-faddle ! there was no liberty for anybody in Venice in the old days, and there never has been any except for a few noble families who oppressed the rest of the population. How could there be any liberty with the Council of Ten? Liberty with State inquisitors? Liberty with the lions, the dungeons and the *piombi* of Venice?' Marshal Duroc remarked that this severe government had been latterly much more lenient. 'Yes, doubtless,' retorted the Emperor, 'the lion of Saint Mark had grown old, his teeth had fallen out and his claws were worn down. Venice had become nothing but the ghost of her former self, and the last of the doges considered that he got a rise in the world when he became a senator of the French Empire.' His Majesty, noticing that this remark brought a smile to the prince viceroy's face, added very gravely: 'I am not joking, *messieurs*. The Roman senators considered themselves of more consequence than kings; a French senator is quite as good as a doge. I wish all nations to accustom themselves to treat the Empire with great respect and to treat even humble French citizens with consideration. I shall do my best to make them do so. . . .'"

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[1] *Charles Frederick* (1728-1811) : first margrave, then grand-duke of Baden-Durlach, inherited the estates of his grandfather, Charles-William, in 1738. Napoleon made him Elector of the Empire in 1803 ; later, in order to compensate him for certain domains which he had lost during the wars of the Republic, he gave him the title of grand-duke, together with some valuable land and the hand of his adopted daughter, Stéphanie de Beauharnais, for his grandson, Prince Charles of Baden, who succeeded him

One result of Napoleon's visit to his step-son was to show him that the viceroy had done his best with the materials at hand and had managed to build up a very fair semblance of popularity. At last Napoleon seems to have been content with his step-son's conduct; perhaps he had not realized, before this visit, what a huge task he had given him to perform. With what pride did Eugène hear his step-father say in the presence of Generals Duroc, Lannes and Bessières: "Ah! I knew well into whose hands I gave my sword in Italy!"

Eugène's Court was conducted upon very simple lines; a certain amount of etiquette was observed, it is true, but it was etiquette founded upon the rules of common sense. Intrigue was as rigorously excluded from his Court as it is possible to exclude such a potent factor in the lives of royal personages. The odious Italian custom of each lady having a *cavaliere servente* was abolished, thanks to Augusta's influence; she wisely chose her ladies-in-waiting from among the French and Italian nobility, so that neither nation might have any cause for complaint. Eugène also made many improvements in Milan, such as building schools, hospitals and other equally necessary institutions.

CHAPTER VII

Austria breaks her promises—Marmont earns for himself the title of duc de Raguse—Eugène receives an invitation to take his bride to Paris—He pays a visit to Istria—Description of a military hospital in the beginning of the nineteenth century—The *armée d'Italie* is ordered to seize Civita-Vecchia—Birth of Eugène's first child—More trouble with the Pope—Birth of Eugène's second child.

THE month of March, 1806, heralded fresh troubles with Austria, who, by the Treaty of Presburg, had bound herself to give Dalmatia to France, whose representative, General Lauriston,[1] was to take over this valuable province. On arriving in Dalmatia, whither he had been sent, General Molitor[2] discovered that the Austrians had broken their promise not to remove their stores of ammunition from the fortresses of Dalmatia—and this was not all. On March 6th, this same general sent word to Eugène that the whole coast, with the exception of the town of Zara, had refused to recognize the Treaty of Presburg, and that numerous Russian and English boats were hovering about near at hand ready to assist the Austrians if necessary. English and Russian spies were in every corner of the country. General Molitor addded that, three days before writing this letter the Russians had landed at Cattaro and, under the pretext that the French had not occupied Dalmatia within the forty days' delay accorded by the Treaty of Presburg, had ordered the Austrians to surrender all the different fortresses in Dalmatia to them. Luckily, the governor, being an honest man, refused to accede to their request. However, an Italian, the marchese Ghisleri, thinking to put a spoke in the viceroy's wheel, had approved of the Russian invasion and reprimanded the Austrian governor.

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[1] *Lauriston*, Alexandre Bernard Law, marquis de (1768–1828): grandson of the celebrated financier Law, entered the French army in 1790, and served under the French flag in Germany and Italy; he captured Ragusa, then followed Napoleon to Spain and Austria, and took an active part in the Battle of Wagram. In 1811 he was sent as Ambassador to Russia. He again fought under the French flag in Russia and Germany, where he was taken prisoner. He changed his politics during the Restoration, and received as his reward the titles of *pair de France* and marshal. He commanded during the wars in Spain in 1823.

[2] *Molitor*, Gabriel J. Joseph (1770-1849): volunteered to fight under the tricolour flag at the beginning of the Revolution; was made captain in 1791, fought and beat the Russians and Austrians in Switzerland. In 1800 he commanded in Germany and the Tyrol. Five years later he won a victory for the French troops at Caldiero by subduing the archduke Karl of Austria. In 1806 he occupied Dalmatia with three regiments and managed to raise the blockade of Ragusa, in which town Lauriston was shut up, dispersing 11,000 Russians and Montenegrins with 1670 Frenchmen. Commissioned in 1807 and 1808 to go to Pomerania, he pursued the Swedes right under the walls of Stralsund and forced them to surrender to him. For these services he was made count and given the sum of 30,000 francs as a reward. The rest of his military career is one of honour, which honour prevented him serving his Emperor's enemies and obliged him to leave the land of his birth. Returning to his native land, he was made Governor of the Invalides, a suitable post for such a brave soldier.

On March 18th Eugène wrote to Marmont, who was then at Udine and whose bravery and skill during this war won for him the title of the duc de Raguse, a letter which certainly ought not to have given offence ; nevertheless, this letter was the beginning of a coolness which eventually developed into bitter enmity born of jealousy that a younger man than himself should have been so favoured by their Imperial master, and of anger that Eugène should have remained at his post to the very last, whereas he, Marmont, had surrendered to the enemy while there was still hope.

"MILAN, *March 18th*, 1806.

"*Monsieur le colonel général*—I send you an extract of a letter written to me by his Majesty the Emperor and King, dated the 13th inst. He wishes his commands to be obeyed as promptly as possible. You will have to draw up a very detailed account of the subject about which his Majesty is anxious to learn ; you must then send it to me so that I may forward it to him according to his desire.

"I am very glad to learn, *Monsieur le général*, that you are profiting by your sojourn at Udine in order to superintend the works which the Emperor ordered to be completed at Palmanova and Osopo. Kindly write me every week an account of these works, in which his Majesty is very interested, and I shall thus find an opportunity to keep in touch with you. Whereupon I pray God to have you in His holy keeping."

We will now reproduce a letter from Eugène to his step-father, who had lately returned to Paris, in which he gives a graphic account of the strict watch kept upon, and of the treatment accorded to the English inhabitants of Venice during these stirring times—Venice, who had only just got rid of her Austrian oppressors and who was so soon to fall into their hands again.

"MILAN, *March 27th*, 1806.

"Sire—A few days ago an Englishman of the name of Graham arrived in Venice; during the past year he made two journeys to London and back. I have had him arrested and searched; his papers have been examined. We found nothing of importance either upon his person or at his lodgings. He has been set at liberty for the time being, but we shall keep our eye upon him.

"I have taken this opportunity to give orders that M. Graham, together with about twenty other Englishmen now in Venice, shall be kept under supervision. I have ordered that all English subjects without exception shall be expelled from Venice, sent to different towns on the Continent and subjected to police supervision. I hope that Your Majesty will approve of this measure. . . .

"M. Charles Barsoni, brother of the Italian secretary of M. Bell, the English governor of Malta, left that island three months ago; at that time the island contained from three to four thousand troops, mostly English, the rest natives of Malta; the latter serve with a very bad grace. The inhabitants seem in general divided between their liking for the English and for the French; those who are employed by the English complain of their harshness and arrogance.

"During his voyage from Messina to Triest, this young man did not see a single English boat. . . ."

From the above and the following letters we see what strict supervision was kept over the movements of the different vessels cruising about in the Mediterranean:

"MILAN, *March 28th*, 1806.

"Sire—Your Majesty commanded me in your letter of the 21st inst. to give you an account of all the movements of the enemies' vessels; by the last reports received, I hear that three frigates, of which two were English and one Russian, together with two brigs, were seen on the 15th inst.; however, since the 20th inst., nearly all the men-of-war which were then in sight have entered the roadstead of Venice and only a few coasting-vessels remain outside. . . ."

Napoleon evidently considered his step-son rather incautious, for in his next letter he sounds a note of warning:

"PARIS, *March 31st*, 1806.

"My Son—Make the Venetian boats hoist the Italian flag; you know that they run great risk of being attacked by the Russians and the English, so they must use great circumspection when venturing out of the harbour. . . ."

Knowing how well his system of allowing his adopted son to see service while still very young had succeeded, Napoleon now recommends him to let his younger aides-de-camp learn to trust to their own wings, and suggests that they should be sent to join the battalion of the royal guards under General Lauriston's command. We often notice that Napoleon seems to have taken more care of his French troops in Italy than of their Italian comrades; perhaps he knew that the French soldiers were more liable to catch fevers than the natives.

It was about this time that the Emperor, in order to reward Eugène for his efforts to govern Italy wisely and well, bestowed upon him the Order of the Iron Crown of Italy; this reward Eugène certainly deserved, for he had worked hard and achieved much during his reign as viceroy. Indeed, the Emperor seems to think in the following letter that his step-son was inclined to work too hard:

"SAINT-CLOUD, *April 14th*, 1806.

"My Son—You work too hard; your life is too monotonous. Work is good for you, but you must remember that your wife is young and that she is now *enceinte*. I think you ought to arrange to pass your evenings in her society and to invite a few friends to stay with you from time to time. Why don't you go to the theatre once a week? I think you ought also to hunt at times, at least once a week; I would gladly defray the cost. You must make your home more cheerful; it is necessary for your wife's happiness and for your own health. One can get through a quantity of work in a very short time. I lead a very similar life to the life you are now leading, only I have an old wife who does not need me to amuse her, and I have more to do than you have. And yet I have more amusements and recreation than you; a young wife needs amusements, especially in the condition in which your wife now is. You used to be fond of society; you must go back to your old tastes. What you would not do for yourself, you ought to do for the princess.

"I have just settled down at Saint-Cloud. Stéphanie and the Prince of Baden seem fairly attached to one another. I have been spending the last few days at Marshal Bessières' house; we romped like children of fifteen years of age.

"You are accustomed to rise early; you must return to your old habits. It would not annoy the princess if you went to bed at eleven o'clock; and if you finish your work by six o'clock at night, by rising at seven or eight o'clock you would still have ten hours in which to work.

"The Cattaro affair will delay the fêtes in May, but I do not think it will last more than a month. I hope that you and the princess will then come to Paris; her condition will not prevent her undertaking the journey, provided that she travels slowly; if the weather is fine, it can only do her good. . . .

"As to the question of an heir, I am not in the habit of asking other people's opinion, and my Italian subjects know me well enough to realize that my little finger has more sense in it than all their stupid heads put together. I am now in Paris, where people are more intelligent than they are in Italy, where people learn to hold their tongues and to trust to the opinion of a man who has proved that he can see farther than anybody else; I am astonished that people in Italy are not equally condescending."

What a letter from the *master* of Europe!

On April 28th the Emperor acquaints Eugène with the fact that he now authorizes him to assume the title of Prince of Venice; however, it was not until December 16th of the following year that this title, by a decree published in the *Moniteur*, was confirmed officially.

The Emperor's next letter is brief, merely a word of warning to the viceroy to be on his guard against the Russian Bear and the old enemy, Albion:

" SAINT-CLOUD, *April 30th*, 1806.

" My Son—Be very careful to tell General Molitor to keep his troops well together and not to let them get scattered among the islands ; for if he is not careful I shall lose every one of them. . . . You can easily understand that England and Russia, who are now practically masters of the situation, will always seize any islands within their reach and manage to hold them by landing five times as many soldiers as they find on the said islands. . . ."

Eugène continued to make many improvements not only at Milan, but in other towns in Italy ; at Bologna he built a school for poor girls which was called the *Maison Joséphine* in honour of his mother ; he also gave large sums of money for scholarships, for the purchase of school-books, etc. etc. In Milan itself he endowed forty poor and virtuous girls in honour of the anniversary of his own happy marriage. Venice also shared in his benefits, for he was most careful to give her a government in accordance with her wishes ; a *podestà* was appointed, with nine *savi* to assist him in his duties. And this was not all, for by giving special attention to the irrigation question in the provinces of Padua, Venice, Ferrara, Bologna, etc., he proved himself a benefactor to the whole of Italy.

Austria was now about to give Eugène an opportunity in which to show his step-father that he was competent to face the difficulties of making war in a foreign land with foreign troops to fight for him. That the Emperor, however, kept a tight rein in Italy is shown by the following letter :

" SAINT-CLOUD, *May 6th*, 1806.

" My Son—The Emperor of Austria agreed, on May 1st at the very latest, to close the ports of Triest and Fiume, together with all the ports along the Austrian coast, to Russian and English vessels. If this has not been done by the time stated, you must write to General Marmont and ask why it has not been done ; for it is my intention to occupy Fiume and Triest. You may threaten, but you must do nothing without my permission. You can have it printed in all the newspapers in the kingdom of Italy, and also in the Venetian newspapers, that the ports of Triest and Fiume will be closed to the English and Russians until the latter choose to restore Cattaro."

Hitherto General Marmont had worn a mask of civility when writing to or addressing Eugène; but he now did a very mean thing, for he wrote to the Emperor complaining that his troops were dissatisfied, which state of affairs was caused by the viceroy having reduced their pay. A lengthy correspondence concerning this matter ensued between the adoptive father and his son; of course, the latter got the worst of it. Eugène had to defend himself as best he could without letting the Emperor see that he, Napoleon, was the culprit owing to his constant demands for money—money for what? For France, for his Court. For whom? For his rapacious brothers and sisters, for Eugène's mother and sister.

Austria's conduct in Dalmatia had been the source of much anxiety to Eugène. It is not given to all of us to be able to sit still and watch others fight and win life's battles; obliged to remain at his post in Milan, only allowed to absent himself from time to time in order to take a brief tour of inspection, Eugène's lot was an unenviable one for a young man accustomed to an active life.

But Eugène was destined to have trouble both at home and abroad. The *savi* of Bologna, whom he had allowed the people to elect, having refused to recognize his authority in several matters, the Emperor gives him a recipe which he knows to be infallible:

"Saint-Cloud, *May 26th*, 1806.

"My Son—I cannot understand the conduct of the *savi* of Bologna. I think they must have taken leave of their senses. I can only see one way to put a stop to their folly, and that is to send them to the right-about without more ado."

In the following letter we find a terrible picture of the sufferings of the soldiers during the beginning of the nineteenth century. The letter is written after Eugène's return from a tour of inspection in Istria:

"Palmanova, *May 27th*, 1806.

"Sire—I returned from my expedition to Istria at three o'clock this afternoon, after having inspected all our magazines, barracks, etc. I have the honour to inform Your Majesty that I found the hospital at Capo in a truly deplorable condition. I will not attempt to describe what I saw there; it suffices to say that nearly all the patients were either dead or dying. I was assured, however, that things were better there than they had been. General Séras is doing his very best. My short visit has already done some good; there is no lack of drugs, but bedding, straw, etc., are very scarce.

"I had to give the head surgeon a good scolding because he took the liberty to say, in the presence of the sick men, certain things calculated to alarm them. He said to me two or three times: 'Don't touch that man, he is infectious!'

"Nobody can be blamed for this state of affairs; arrangements had been made for an army of six thousand men; that is to say, for a reasonable proportion of sick and wounded, but not for more. I saw eleven hundred sick men, four hundred of whom were going on very well; more than one hundred had been given over by the surgeons. But I hope for better things from day to day."

That Napoleon was still distrustful of his adopted son's talent for governing is shown by the following letter of special instructions concerning his treatment of the hated Albion's subjects abroad:

"SAINT-CLOUD, *June 10th*, 1806.

"My Son—General Duhesme[1] is leaving the *armée de Naples* in order to go to Civita-Vecchia with the 4th Italian regiment and a regiment of Italian dragoons. Send a member of your staff to this general with orders from me to seize Civita-Vecchia and prevent the English holding any communication with this stronghold or with the coast; he must seize all English merchandise, all English consuls or agents belonging to that nation; he must allow no English subjects to remain on the sea-coast. He is to hoist my imperial eagle on the towers and forts of Civita-Vecchia and to leave the Pope's arms where they are. . . ."

Another letter on the same subject follows a few days later:

"SAINT-CLOUD, *June 21st*, 1806.

"My Son—I send you a letter from General Duhesme. He must seize Ostia—this is extremely important if we want to prevent any English merchandise entering the Tiber. Give orders that, both at Ancona and at Civita-Vecchia, all English goods be confiscated. . . ."

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[1] *Duhesme*, Guillaume-Philibert (1766–1815): first commanded a battalion of volunteers during the wars of the Republic, was given command of the *jeune garde* during the *Cent-Jours*, and perished at Waterloo.

It was a bitter disappointment to Eugène that his step-father had not given him command of the *armée de Dalmatie ;* however, Napoleon showed his common sense when he made Eugène remain at his post in Milan. Stifling his vexation, the viceroy now turned his attention to Venice, which for some years had been in a very miserable condition as far as its commerce was concerned ; he declared the port free to all nations except England, that country being excluded as a punishment for her conduct in trying to spoil France's game in Dalmatia. Eugène visited Venice in person and gave orders for several men-of-war to be built for the French navy, returning to Milan in July.

Early in September Napoleon announced to his step-son the important news which the latter had been expecting for some time, namely, the war with Prussia ; at the same time he told Eugène to be ready in case he should require his services, and to keep a sharp look-out over events at Palma-nova, Osopo and Vince, and especially on the Austrian frontier. In a letter written by the Emperor from Saint-Cloud he blames his step-son for believing all he hears :

"SAINT-CLOUD, *September* 15*th*, 1806.

"My Son—I have received your letter of September 11th, in which you inform me that General Duhesme has acquainted you of the fact that the English have landed at Fondi. It grieves me to see that you act too precipitately. I beg you not to meddle with the duchies of Parma and Piacenza. As to your idea about those eight thousand Spaniards, I can't imagine where you got it : the whole affair shows me that you are rather scatter-brained. This invasion is probably nothing but an inroad of a few brigands ; whatever or whoever they may be, you can do nothing in the matter. . . . You also acted too hastily when the Russians and English landed at Naples. You must keep calm and exercise greater *sang-froid*. . . . What would be the good of sending twelve or fifteen hundred troops there if the English have landed in such large numbers ? Don't you suppose that the King of Naples would have driven them into the sea? . . . If the English had landed fifteen thousand troops at Gaeta, and if the King of Naples had been unable to make them beat a retreat, you would have only wasted your strength and weakened Ancona and Pescara. What good could you have done in the matter? None at all. So keep quiet and wait for further news."

As usual, Napoleon was right; General Duhesme had been misinformed concerning an important invasion of Spanish and English troops at Fondi, and Eugène had a scolding all for nothing.

In October, Eugène paid another visit to Venice in order to see for himself how the vessels which were being built in that seaport were progressing. In this same month Napoleon sends him news of his latest successes:

"*October 14th*, 1806.

"My Son—The Prussian army no longer exists. All the soldiers who fought at the battle of Jena (160,000 men) have either been killed, wounded or taken prisoner; not a single man crossed the Oder. I am master of their fortresses at Spandau and Stettin. My troops have now reached the Polish frontier. The King of Prussia[1] has crossed the Vistula: he has not even got 10,000 troops. I am fairly content with the behaviour of the inhabitants of Berlin. I am sending the different decrees you require."

A day or two later he sends Augusta word that her grandmother has suffered no harm at his hands, but that her aunt, the Queen of Prussia,[2] "has behaved very badly."

Where in modern history do we find a more wonderful record of victories so rapidly and skilfully won as Napoleon's progress through Prussia and Poland? Auerstädt, Jena,

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[1] *Frederick William III* (1770–1840): King of Prussia, at first refused to join the different European coalitions against Napoleon, but finally sided with Russia. The victory of Jena opened the gates of Berlin to the Emperor of the French, and the Treaty of Tilsitt in 1807 deprived Frederick William of half his possessions. In 1812 he was forced to supply Napoleon with 25,000 soldiers, but he got his revenge when he and his troops finally entered Paris with the Allies. The last years of his reign were troubled by disputes among his clergy.

[2] *Louisa Augusta Wilhelmina Amelia* (1776–1810): daughter of the duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and Caroline of Hesse-Darmstadt, married in 1793 the Hereditary Prince of Prussia (*see above*); she and her husband were particularly happy during their union. She accompanied him on nearly all his military expeditions, and consoled and encouraged him when disaster fell upon him.

Berlin, Eylau, Friedland, Tilsitt—what pictures of mingled glory and horror these names awaken!

The year 1806 had seen one or two important changes in the geography of Europe: Joseph Bonaparte had been made King of Naples in place of Ferdinand I, king of the Two Sicilies,[1] who had sought refuge in Sicily; while Louis Bonaparte, the husband of Eugène's sister, had been given the throne of Holland by his powerful brother.

But Napoleon was being constantly harassed by Austria and England. As we have already seen, the port of the Pearl of the Adriatic had been closed to English commerce. In November, 1806, by a decree signed in Berlin on the 21st of that month, Napoleon conceived a plan which he hoped would completely ruin England through her commerce: he decreed the famous continental system which closed all European ports to English merchandise. He writes to Eugène concerning this system:

"POSEN, *December 1st*, 1806.

"My Son—You will have received my decree concerning the continental system. Take care that all letters written in English or by English subjects are read and confiscated. We must prevent all communication between England and the Continent."

Napoleon was one of a numerous family of brothers and sisters, and some of those brothers and sisters now expressed the hope that he would allow them to have a share in the fruits of his late victories. Caroline Murat, grande-duchesse de Berg,[2] secretly hoped that her husband would be made King of Poland, for it was said that Napoleon intended to place a member of his family upon the throne of that distressful country, whose sorrows have caused her to be likened to Ireland and Alsace-Lorraine; while Josephine, forgetting that her son had already as much as he could manage in Italy, confided to her friends that she was con-

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[1] *Ferdinand IV*, King of Naples (de Bourbon), or Ferdinand I, king of the Two Sicilies (1759–1825): son of Charles III of Spain, was twice driven from Naples by the French; his weak disposition was completely under the dominion of numerous favourites and petty tyrants headed by his wife, Maria Caroline, and his English minister Acton. He continued to reign in Sicily, thanks to English protection, and was eventually able to return to Naples (1815).

[2] Joachim Murat, for his services during the campaign against Austria in 1805 when he entered Vienna at the head of the army, was rewarded with the grand-duchy of Berg.

CHARGE OF THE GRENADIERS DE LA GARDE AT EYLAU

From the picture by F. Schommer. By kind permission of the artist

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vinced that her husband would bestow the crown of Poland upon the faithful Eugène. However, the Emperor decided otherwise.

Turkey and England now seemed about to go to war. Napoleon, as England's sworn enemy, naturally sided with Turkey, although the latter was not a very valuable ally, and despite—or was it on account of the fact that she was at enmity with Russia, over whose melancholy steppes he was longing to march his army ? He showed his sympathy by ordering Eugène to send one of his aides-de-camp with money and troops to Constantinople.

Matters in Dalmatia continued in a very unsatisfactory condition until the following July, when the Peace of Tilsitt put an end to the viceroy's anxiety.

During the winter of 1806–7 Josephine learnt that her son's wife was expecting to become a mother. This news was very welcome to the Empress ; the best thing that could happen for her, as she had failed to provide Napoleon with an heir, would be for her son to have as many sons as possible. On receiving the news, Napoleon wrote off one of his brusque but affectionate letters to the woman whom he considered one of the most beautiful princesses of her time :

" My Daughter—I was delighted to get your letter. I thank you for all your kind messages. You are quite right to trust to my affection. Take great care of yourself in your present condition, and try not to give us a girl. I will give you a recipe, but I'm afraid you won't try it : it is to drink a little pure wine every day. Let us soon hear that you have got a fine boy. If you give us a girl, may she be as good and as amiable as her mother."

The month of January, 1807, was spent by Eugène in putting the finishing touch to his task in Italy ; his already large army was increased by 9000 troops, which troops were raised by conscription.

On March 14th a little daughter was born to the viceroy and vice-reine of Italy. General Anthouard was sent to inform Napoleon, who was then in Poland, of the child's birth, while Josephine, in Paris, learnt from M. de Martinengo, one of the viceroy's equerries, that she was the grandmother of a little princess (to be known in Italy as the

Princess of Bologna until Fate removed her parents to another land), and related to some of the most powerful royal families. We can easily imagine Napoleon's disappointment on learning the sex of the new-born child. Did he not hold it all-important that his relatives should have as many sons as possible, so that, in the event of he himself never having an heir, he might leave his splendid possessions to a member of his family? And, as we know, he included Eugène among his relatives, although Eugène was no blood relation.

Nevertheless, on learning the news he wrote the following affectionate letter to the baby's father:

"My Son—I congratulate you upon the princess's accouchement. I long to hear that she is going on well and that she is out of danger. I hope that your daughter will be as virtuous and amiable as her mother. Now you must contrive to have a boy next year. You did quite right to send me those papers. The Keeper of the Seals must send the certificate of birth to Paris, so that it can be inscribed in my family register. Send it to M. Cambacérès,[1] who knows my wishes on the subject. Call your daughter Josephine."

It is more than probable that Eugène and Augusta were quite as disappointed as the Emperor at the baby being a girl, so much seemed to depend upon the sex of this their first child. Who can tell what Fate holds in store for us? Only a few weeks later, Hortense's first son, the pride of his mother, a strong, lively child, the child upon whom the Emperor had centred all his hopes, died of croup and was laid to rest in his little shroud, taking with him the last vestiges of his parents' mutual affection.

Napoleon seems to have realized his adopted son's disappointment from the following letter, with its quaint postscript:

"OSTERODE, *March 27th*, 1807.

"My Son—I was glad to get your letter of the 17th inst., in which you told me that the princess was in good health.

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[1] *Cambacérès*, Jean Jacques Régis de (1759–1824): jurisconsult, second consul during Napoleon's office as First Consul, and archchancellor during the Empire.

You must not hurry over the child's baptism. Let me know when you have arranged the matter and whom you have chosen to be godfather and godmother. You need not send any official intimation; I have had it all arranged by the Keeper of the Seals in Paris."

A postscript in his own handwriting says:

"Is Augusta sorry she has not had a boy? Tell her that when one begins with a girl, one always has at least twelve children."

The little daughter was christened Joséphine Maximilienne Eugénie, after her grandmother, grandfather and aunt. As soon as Augusta was strong enough to put pen to paper, she wrote a few lines of thanks to her husband's step-father for his kind interest in her and her baby.

Napoleon replies:

"My Daughter—I have received your letter; not only does it give me great pleasure to see that you are really devoted to the Prince (Eugène), but I am genuinely pleased to hear that you are so happy together. I know that you have suffered a great deal and that you have been very brave. Your very affectionate father."

The months of April and May were spent by Eugène in making various improvements in his capital and in visiting Vicenza and Verona, where he reviewed his troops.

Towards the end of March, Eugène, in consequence of the deceitful behaviour of the Papal Court and of many of the Italian cardinals, was obliged to report certain rumours which he had lately heard to his step-father. Although Pius VII had never forgiven Napoleon for forcing him, the Infallible Head of the Catholic Church, to bend to the will of "the Corsican bandit," the Holy Father was quite willing to keep friends with the viceroy; indeed, Eugène and his young wife were rather favourites with His Holiness: did not Augusta belong by birth to one of the most religious nations in Europe? Napoleon was furious on learning that the Pope, to whom he thought he had given a lesson which would last him all his life, was again thrusting up his head.

In his anger he wrote off to Eugène:

"FINKENSTEIN, *April 3rd*, 1807.

"My Son—I enclose you a letter for the Holy Father which you will kindly send to Rome; if he says anything more after getting my letter we will ignore him. I shall take good care to make the Roman Court repent of its bad behaviour when I think fit to do so, but it is not the proper time to attend to such matters now.

"P.S.—On second thoughts, I am not writing to the Pope. I am not going to argue with idiots: the best thing is to turn one's back upon them."

However, as the Pope still continued his system of resistance, which manifested itself in a determination not to recognize Joseph Bonaparte as King of Naples, in a threat to appeal to the different European nations, and in taxing the Romans very heavily on a plea that the presence of a foreign army in Italy was a great drain upon the country, Napoleon wrote another letter:

"FINKENSTEIN, *April 12th*, 1807.

"My Son—Reply to the Pope that you are going to give General Tisson strict orders to treat His Holiness and his representatives with every consideration. Take advantage of this opportunity to tell him that it would be a very good thing if His Holiness would kindly settle the discussion concerning the Italian bishoprics by giving investiture to his bishops. Tell him that I know all about the matter, that you yourself heard me say: '*So the Pope does not wish me to have anything to do with the bishops in Italy?* That's a nice thing! Does he call that Christian behaviour?' . . . Tell him that your affection for him makes you wish him not to offend me; that, owing to the secret hints of certain spiteful busybodies, every opportunity has been taken to annoy me; that I used to esteem the Pope; that his late conduct has caused me to change my opinion of him, and that not only is his behaviour very stupid, but it is distinctly un-Christian. Write also to General Tisson that he is not to line his pockets at other people's expense, that I will allow nothing of the sort, and that he is to behave in a seem lymanner. Let General Tisson remain in Rome:

priests are always dissatisfied, no matter who is in authority."

We now find a letter to Augusta *à propos* of her sister-in-law, Hortense, who had just lost her eldest child, the little boy mentioned on a previous page, the little Napoleon whom the Great Napoleon had loved so tenderly and whom the Emperor had chosen, shortly before the child's death, to succeed him on the throne of France, supposing he had no son of his own.

"*June 20th*, 1807.

"My Daughter—I have received your letter of June 10th. I thank you for all you say concerning the death of little Napoleon.[1] His mother is unreasonable; she grieves too much. We must be brave and learn to be resigned in matters which are beyond our control.[2] I am very anxious to see little Josephine, and I hope she will be like her mother."

The death of little Napoleon helped to widen the breach between Hortense and Louis Bonaparte. The Queen of Holland had never really loved her husband; she, with her energetic, over-impulsive nature, was ill-suited to be the wife of a nervous, retiring man like the King of Holland. It needed all her brother-in-law's powers of persuasion to get her to continue to live with her unhappy husband. During one of her long absences from her home, she, while pleading with the Emperor not to make her return to the man she hated, cried:

"My reputation is tarnished, my health is ruined; I can hope for no happiness in this world. Banish me from your heart, if you will; shut me up in a convent; I neither wish for a throne nor for fortune. Make my mother happy, give Eugène all the good things he deserves, but let me live alone and in peace!"

It was said that, on the death of little Napoleon-Charles, Josephine urged Napoleon to make Eugène his successor on the thrones of France and Italy. At her request Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély also mentioned the matter to the Emperor; but the latter, probably recognizing Josephine's hand in the ambitious project, had taken no notice of the hint beyond remarking to Lavalette that: "Eugène was too old to be chosen as his successor." And Eugène had another partisan in the person of Signora Letizia, that astute old Corsican lady who held the viceroy in high esteem and considered that he, in default of issue, would make a most suitable successor to her great son. But Napoleon was not in the habit of allowing himself to be influenced by women-folk in political matters.

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[1] *Napoleon-Charles*, born 1802, died 1807.

[2] Does not this letter explain Napoleon's supposed apathy at Saint Helena?

July 8th saw the signing of the Peace of Tilsitt, after Napoleon's celebrated interview with Alexander of Russia[1] on the banks of the Niemen, which treaty allowed Europe a little breathing-space, robbed Prussia of half her territory, created the kingdom of Walachia for Jérôme Bonaparte, Napoleon's favourite brother, gave Prussia's Polish provinces, under the name of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, to the King of Saxony,[2] authorized Russia to take possession of Finland and Moldavia, ceded Corfu to France and left that country a free hand in the west; it likewise put an end to the war in Dalmatia which had been going on for the past eighteen months, for Alexander, who had now joined the troop of Napoleon's fair-weather friends, ordered his soldiers to leave that province. While waiting in Padua for orders to return home, the Russian officers commanding these troops behaved in an extraordinary manner: they blamed the conduct of the government at home, reviled the French, and even went the length of trampling Napoleon's portrait under foot in public. They were encouraged in this conduct by several wealthy families of Padua, who, strange to say, preferred the Austrian tyranny to Eugène's easy rule, fêted the Russian officers and applauded them for their independent spirit. But Napoleon took care to punish the inhabitants of Padua when, in the following autumn, he purposely avoided passing through their city on his way from Milan to Venice. Realizing that they had gone a little too far, the citizens of Livy's native town sent a priest named Cesarotti to plead for forgiveness from the indignant Emperor.

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[1] *Alexander I Paulowitz*, Emperor of Russia (1777–1825): was vanquished by Napoleon, for whom he expressed great admiration as long as he was successful. Alexander joined the coalition against France, and entered Paris as conqueror in 1814 and 1815.

[2] *Friedrich-August III*, Elector of Saxony: received as his reward for supplying Napoleon with troops the title of King of Saxony, where he reigned under the name of Friedrich-August I. He remained faithful to the Emperor, whereupon the confederate kings treated him as a prisoner of war (1813) and deprived him of a large part of his possessions (1815).

"Sire," said the worthy priest, "the nobility alone are guilty. If the nobles of Padua *will* be idiots, must all the citizens suffer for their folly?"

The Emperor could not help laughing; he promised to forgive and forget the nobles' foolish conduct, decorated their honest ambassador and increased his stipend to 4000 francs.

It might have been better if Pius VII had imitated Padre Cesarotti's conduct in braving the lion in his den. But, alas! it would seem as if the Pope had determined, after having been too yielding, to thwart the Emperor in every way. His conduct produced another letter from Napoleon, who was fast losing patience:

"DRESDEN, *July 22nd*, 1807.

"My Son—I have read in a letter supposed to be written by His Holiness (which I am sure *he* never wrote) that he actually dares to threaten me. Does he think, then, that the rights of the throne are less sacred in God's eyes than the rights of the tiara? *Kings were instituted before Popes.* The clergy say that they will let the whole world hear of the harm I have done to religion. Madmen! do they not know that there is not a corner of Germany, Italy or Poland where I have not done more good to religion than the Pope has done harm—not purposely, but in consequence of the bad advice of certain narrow-minded members of his *entourage?* They want to denounce me to Christendom; such a ridiculous idea can only arise from a profound ignorance of the century in which we live; they are a thousand years behind the times. The Pope who would do such a thing would cease to be a Pope in my estimation. . . . The Court of Rome has been preaching rebellion for the last two years; it preached it at Lucca and, in fact, all over Italy. For long I have suffered for all the good I have done; the present Pope persecutes me; but I shall cease to recognize him if ever I discover that he is the author of all this bother and cavil. I would not allow another Pope to behave as he has behaved. What does Pius VII mean by saying he will denounce me? Does he want to place my thrones under an interdict? Does he want to excommunicate me? Does he think that my soldiers' weapons will fall from their hands at his behest? Does he want to arm my people against me? And this infamous doctrine is preached by hot-headed Popes born for the curse of mankind! The Holy Father, while he is about it, might just as well make me cut my hair and shut me up in a monastery. Does he think that our country has gone back to the ignorance and superstition of the eighth century? Does he take me for *Louis le Débonnaire?* . . . The present Pope took the trouble to attend my coronation in Paris. I recognized the holy prelate in this act; but when he wanted me to give up the legations to him, I neither wished nor was I able to do so. The present Pope is too powerful. Priests are not made to govern. Let them imitate Saint Peter, Saint Paul, and the holy apostles, who were worth all the Julius, Bonifaces, Gregories and Leos put together. Jesus Christ said that His kingdom was not of this world. Why does the Pope refuse to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's? Is there anybody higher than Jesus Christ on earth? . . . Is religion founded upon anarchy, civil war and disobedience? Is he preaching the doctrine of Jesus Christ? The Pope threatens to appeal to the different nations, that is to say, to all my subjects. What will they say? They will say what I say: that they want religion, but they will not put up with any outside interference; that we will submit to the Divine Will, to the inspiration of a saintly anchorite, but never will we submit to the will of a vicar of God, an earthly sovereign who while pretending to attend to religious matters allows himself to be influenced by all the passions attendant upon human arrogance. Were he a humble anchorite he would only work for God, and would not be tempted by the demon of discord and earthly vanity. How blind they are in Rome not to realize that it was I who re-established religion in France; that I endowed the clergy. The Court of Rome wishes to make trouble in the Church, not to further the interests of religion. It wishes to make trouble that it may become all-powerful and enslave the public mind in temporal and spiritual affairs. I verily begin to blush and to feel humiliated when I think of all the affronts which I have had to endure; and perhaps the time is not far distant when, if the Church continues to meddle with the affairs of my States, I shall only recognize the Pope as the Bishop of Rome, as equal to the bishops of my States. . . . I owe my crown to God and to the wishes of my subjects. . . . I shall always be a Charlemagne, never a *Louis le Dêbonnaire*. . . ."

The Pope was not the only person in Italy who dared to go against Napoleon. Notwithstanding the continental system, a great deal of English merchandise was constantly being seized in Italy; for the Queen of Etruria, although she owed her possessions to Napoleon's generosity, allowed English goods to enter Leghorn. The Emperor determined to give her a lesson.

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *September 29th*, 1807.

"My Son—English merchandise is constantly entering the kingdom of Italy; some of the English goods seized in Leghorn *came through Milan*. It is time to put a stop to this state of affairs. Order all English merchandise to be seized and take steps to prevent any crossing the frontier. The only way to get peace is *to wage continual war against English manufactures*. A great deal of merchandise enters the kingdom bearing false stamps. It seems that the Italian custom-house is mismanaged."

Eugène, ever anxious to avoid open war with the Pope, now readily listened to the French ambassador in Rome when that gentleman advised him to send someone to Paris who could explain matters and make peace between the Emperor and the Head of the Catholic Church. Eugène, knowing how obstinate the Holy Father could be on occasion, expected but little good to come of this interview; indeed, he said in a letter written about this time to his step-father:

"The Holy Father would rather allow himself to be martyred than listen to reason."

Whereupon Napoleon replied:

"Despatch some troops in the direction of Bologna, and then, if the Pope does anything foolish, we will deprive him of his States."

We may believe Napoleon's assertions that he wished to keep friends with Pius VII, but we can hardly think that the Pope did not wish to exasperate the Emperor when he chose Cardinal Litta, one of Napoleon's particular enemies, to go to Paris and negotiate a peace. Naturally, Napoleon refused to parley with a man who he knew desired nothing more than to see France humbled. Pius VII thought better of the matter, and eventually sent Cardinal de Bayanne, who was a favourite with Napoleon, to attend to the important business. However, not all the interviews in the world can settle questions when both parties are equally determined not to give in.

Napoleon now passes from threats to deeds. Towards the end of September Eugène receives orders to prepare to occupy the duchy of Urbino and the provinces of Macerata, Fermo and Spoletto; Napoleon hoped that, by so doing, the kingdom of Naples would be released from its isolated position.

We find in a letter written by the Emperor from Fontainebleau, dated October 1st, 1807, that he had no better opinion of jewellers than of architects and Popes.

"My Son—The Empress is sending the vice-reine of Italy a spray of hortensias[1] in diamonds. I wish you, without letting the Princess know, to have it valued by some trustworthy jewellers; you must then let me hear what they value it at, so that I may know how much my jewellers are in the habit of cheating me."

As we have already seen, Tuscany was in a very unsettled condition. Each month saw the discovery of a fresh plot to obtain more complete independence than that country had enjoyed since General Bonaparte occupied it in 1796. Eugène gives his step-father an account of how he treated the conspirators in one of the most important of these conspiracies:

"MONZA, *October 9th*, 1807.

"Sire—I was informed about four weeks ago that a huge conspiracy was being concocted in Tuscany in order to undermine the security and peace of the kingdom of Italy.

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[1] The hortensia was brought to France for the first time during the Empire and named after Hortense de Beauharnais.

"I took the greatest pains to discover the ringleaders, their method of working and their object.

"The result of my investigation showed that no conspiracy existed at that time, but that some men already convicted of various crimes had enrolled themselves under the banner of four or five good-for-nothing priests determined to make trouble in the furthermost departments of Tuscany whenever a favourable opportunity should occur.

"I immediately commissioned some spies to get in touch with these brigands, and from them I learnt all I wanted to know. The ringleaders are the arch-priest Ricci of San-Martino-in-Ovillo, the arch-priest of Couvercelle, the vicar of Rocca San Calciano and a priest from Faenza named Lega, an old hand at the game.

"Their agents were a number of brigands whose names I need not mention. Their method consisted of writing to a great many worthless vagabonds living on the banks of the Rubicon[1]; the four Tuscan priests had already got together quite a large supply of fire-arms and ammunition. Their object was to bring about an insurrection on the other side of the Rubicon and to make it as far-reaching as possible, to massacre all public functionaries, all persons devoted to Your Majesty, etc.

"We have arrested all the guilty persons we could find in the kingdom. We are searching for the others. As for me, I continue to question those who have already been arrested and to superintend the search for those whom we hope to arrest."

Napoleon, satisfied with Eugène's conduct but anxious to give him somebody to help him in his difficult task, now sent General Lemarrois[2] to Italy with orders to take command not only of the French troops at that time in the Papal States, but also of the Papal troops, with the title of governor-general of the legations of Urbino, Ancona, Macerata and Fermo. This measure was justified by the conduct of Pius VII, who refused to expel from his States many persons known to be enemies of France.

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[1] Rubicon or Fiumicino, a river in the Italian Romagna. This river is the ancient Rubicon which was the boundary between Cis-alpine Gaul and Italy.

[2] *Lemarrois, François* (1776–1836): distinguished himself as Bonaparte's aide-de-camp at Lodi and Roveredo, was made brigadier-general in 1802, repressed the insurrection of Torgau, became governor first of Stettin, then Warsaw, and finally Rome. He defended Magdeburg very bravely in 1813, was made *pair de France* during the *Cent-Jours*, and forced to retire from public life after the return of the Bourbons.

In this same month (November, 1807) Napoleon sent word to Eugène that he was coming to pay him another visit. The Emperor left Fontainebleau on November 16th. On reaching the foot of the Mont-Cenis he was greeted by a perfect blizzard; anybody but Napoleon would have waited to cross until the storm had passed. But Napoleon, ever impatient to get to the end of his journey, determined, as riding was impossible, to go on foot. He therefore started off with three officers belonging to his staff; the little caravan got along very well for some time, but at last Napoleon, unaccustomed to walking up-hill in blinding snow, was so exhausted that his officers had to bribe some peasants going the same way to help them carry their Emperor to the hospice on the top of the pass. In return for the hospitable welcome received from the hands of the good monks, their distinguished guest afterwards gave this haven of refuge several handsome gifts of money. On reaching Milan, November 21st, several days before the arrival of his ministers, Napoleon was accorded a most enthusiastic reception by the populace.

It was a pleasant surprise to Augusta, who was lying ill at Monza in consequence of a miscarriage, when Napoleon, having invited the King and Queen of Bavaria and the vicereine's sister, Charlotte, to meet him in Milan, came to pay her a visit and brought her whole family with him.

The Emperor left Milan November 28th, in order to go and see his brother Joseph, King of Naples. He travelled in company with his step-son, the Bavarian royal family, the Princess of Lucca,[1] the grand-duke of Berg,[2] and the Prince of Neufchâtel.[3] After visiting several other Italian towns, Napoleon returned to Milan on December 15th, when, five days later, he went in state to a meeting of the electoral colleges, where, in recognition of Eugène's services and as a mark of his affection and esteem for the viceroy of Italy, he promulgated the 4th constitutional statute of February 16th, 1806, by which he adopted Eugène as his son, and appointed him, in default of legitimate or natural male heirs, to succeed him on the throne of Italy and confirmed to him the title of Prince of Venice, after doing which the Emperor returned to France.

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[1] In 1805 Napoleon gave Lucca to his sister Elisa as an independent State under the title of the duchy of Lucca and Piombino.

[2] Murat was made grand-duke of Berg in 1806.

[3] General Berthier, Prince de Neufchâtel and Prince de Wagram, married a niece of the King of Bavaria.

Here is the letter in which the Emperor thanks Eugène for his New Year wishes and sends him a present of a sword :

" *January 3rd*, 1808.

" My Son—I thank you for your letter containing your good wishes for the New Year. I send you, as my New Year's gift, a sword worn by me on the battle-field of Jena. I hope that it will bring you good luck and that you will win glory with it if ever circumstances oblige you to defend the fatherland."

He could not have chosen a more suitable present ; for Eugène, during his three years' viceroyship, had quadrupled the strength of the Italian forces. And then his absolutely honest policy had set a good example ; he expected his subordinates to be as honest as himself.

To Augusta, the Emperor wrote at the same time :

" My Daughter—I have received your letter dated December 29th. I thank you for all you say. I was truly pleased to see you again. I hope that we shall have you with us during the coming year. The little princess of Bologna will then be considerably older and able to understand all my love for, and my interest in her."

The Emperor's conduct in sending General Lemarrois to occupy the provinces of Urbino, Ancona, Macerata and Fermo was the last straw on the camel's back : the fire of enmity between the Head of the Church and the Restorer of the Catholic faith in France burst forth with renewed vigour. The Pope took his revenge by sending pedlars bearing seditious pamphlets preaching open rebellion to the different provinces administered by Eugène. The natives took the matter into their own hands and murdered any French soldiers imprudent enough to venture in lonely places after nightfall. Naturally these murders led to other murders, for the law of retaliation holds good in Italy as elsewhere. At last Napoleon declared that the only thing left to do was to occupy Rome.

On January 10th Eugène received orders to send General Miollis to carry out his step-father's commands, at the same time recommending him to observe the greatest respect towards the refractory Holy Father. Therefore, on February 2nd, 1808, General Miollis occupied Rome and the castle of Sant' Angelo, the Marches were confiscated and the Pope requested to join the Franco-Italian alliance. Napoleon writes :

" PARIS, *February 12th*, 1808.

" My Son—I have just received the news that my troops entered Rome on February 2nd, and that the consul and Queen Caroline's[1] agents were arrested immediately. Write to General Miollis to seize the police, to treat the Papal troops with leniency, to take command of them and to be careful that they want for nothing, to expel the Neapolitan rebels, and the cardinals too, if necessary, and to send them back to Naples to their sovereign."

The Pope was furious and showed his anger by scattering briefs and bulls broadcast, to which Napoleon replied by ordering twenty Neapolitan prelates who were then in Rome to return from whence they came.

" PARIS, *March 13th*, 1808.

" My Son—You can allow the Neapolitan workmen and monks to remain in Rome as long as they behave themselves. The cardinals and nobles must return to Naples. You must treat the former King of Sardinia[2] leniently, for he has now quite retired from business. You can tell him that he need have no cause to fear for his own safety."

Little did the Pope care for all these futile efforts to destroy his old-established power. His next move was to distribute, as a rallying sign, a new cockade to his guards. But Napoleon was even with him.

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[1] *Marie-Caroline* (1752-1814): Queen of Naples, daughter of Francis I, Emperor of Germany, and Marie-Thérèse, the worthy patroness of Acton and Lady Hamilton, and one of Napoleon's many female pet aversions, caused her husband, Ferdinand I, king of the Two Sicilies, to fly from his kingdom on two occasions owing to her conduct.

[2] Charles Emmanuel II, son of Victor Amadeo III, had endeavoured to rule his people with a heavy hand; he beheld his States occupied by French troops and incorporated in the French Republic in 1798. He abdicated in 1802 in favour of his brother Victor Emmanuel and retired to Rome, where he died in 1819. His wife was a daughter of Louis XV of France.

"SAINT-CLOUD, *March 23rd*, 1808.

"My Son—Write to General Miollis to disarm any Papal guards wearing any uniform or cockade which they are not accustomed to wear; have them arrested and imprisoned in the castle of Sant' Angelo. If the Pope tries to form another body-guard for himself, as rumour says he is going to do, he must be prevented. In short, he is to recognize no armed men or troops who are not under his command. . . ."

General Miollis was no less anxious than the viceroy and the vice-reine to avoid wounding the Holy Father's feelings, but it was a difficult matter not to do so if he was to carry out the commands contained in the following letter from Napoleon:

"SAINT-CLOUD, *March 27th*, 1808.

"My Son—The Papal guards must be arrested. General Miollis did wrong to take the old cockade away from the Papal troops and make them wear a different one. Make them wear either the Italian or French cockade, whichever they prefer. Tell Miollis to be sure to see that my commands are obeyed, and to shoot down any wearer or distributer of cockades, even if he happen to be a cardinal. General Miollis did wrong to fire a salute on the Pope's birthday; for the latter has behaved so badly that he deserves to be paid out in his own coin. Miollis must keep his troops well in hand, and he must repress the slightest attempt at revolt with gunpowder and shot. *Kindness is thrown away upon cowards. . . .*"

The Pope now produced his trump-card: he threatened to excommunicate the Restorer of the Catholic faith in France! But Napoleon cared as little for excommunication as another crowned head—Henry VIII of England—had cared on a previous occasion.

On April 2nd Eugène received commands to annex the legations of Urbino, Macerata, Ancona and Fermo; however, he was not to do so until the 30th inst., and he was to keep the matter secret. Eugène tells his step-father in a letter dated April 15th that he has heard from General Miollis that several nobles belonging to the Papal guard, having tasted the pleasures of imprisonment in the castle of Sant' Angelo for a few days, had begged to be allowed to doff the Papal uniform and cockade.

He adds: "I consented; but I shall keep them in prison for another fortnight as a punishment for their insolence."

The Pope, having got wind of the fact that the Eagle had seized some more of his property in its rapacious claws, wrote to all the different European powers a letter of protest against "the desecration of Rome by French troops." Alas! he was only wasting his time. The different European powers were at that time employed picking up the pieces of their mutilated States or getting ready to resist fresh inroads.

On April 30th Eugène announced the fact that three new departments had been added to the kingdom of Italy, viz. the department of Metauro, with Ancona as its capital; the department of Musone, capital Macerata; and the department of Tronto, capital Fermo.

A few days later he received a hint from the Emperor to keep a watchful eye over the comings and goings of the English in Italy, with orders to command all Italian subjects serving abroad to return to their native land.

But Napoleon was now about to have his attention taken away from Italy. The Court of Spain had for long been the scene of scandal and family dissensions. The reign of the Prince of Peace, Godoy,[1] the favourite of Charles IV,[2] had been anything but a peaceful reign; matters came to a climax with the Process of the Escurial. The French troops entered Spain in March, 1808; very soon after this event a rumour was spread that Charles IV and his wife were about to attempt to imitate Louis XVI's flight to Varennes. It is hard to say whether there was any truth in this report; anyhow, Godoy thought it best to resign his position as Prime Minister and prime favourite. On the morrow (March 19th) the world was not altogether surprised to learn that the King, unable to govern without the assistance of his favourite, had resigned his crown in favour of his son Ferdinand,[1] whom, *en passant*, he had accused, only a few months ago, of trying to murder his mother[2] and dethrone his father. Murat was on the spot; he saw his opportunity and seized it. He occupied Madrid without more ado—which was just as well for Madrid, for Charles IV changed his mind on the following day and informed the Emperor that he had withdrawn his abdication. But Napoleon had lost patience by this time. He ordered the whole party to be taken to Bayonne; we may be sure that they did not go willingly. He himself arrived there April 15th. He writes to Eugène:

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[1] *Don Manuel Godoy* or *Godoï* (1767–1851): the so-called Prince of Peace, favourite of King Charles IV of Spain; during the reign of Ferdinand VII he took refuge in France, where he eventually died. He married the king's cousin, Maria Teresa de Bourbon.

[2] *Charles IV of Spain* (1748–1819): was no less governed by his wife and that wife's lover, Manuel Godoy, than Ferdinand I, king of the Two Sicilies. After the execution of Louis XVI in 1793 he declared war against France, but was quickly worsted and obliged to sign the treaty of Bâle. The disastrous wars with Portugal and England destroyed his *prestige* among the other European powers. Napoleon gave him his *coup-de-grâce* when he sent him to Compiègne. He passed the rest of his life in Marseilles and Rome, where he died.

"BAYONNE, *May 6th*, 1808.

"My Son—Enclosed you will find a pamphlet containing an account of what has lately happened in Spain. We shall soon have matters straight, however. King Charles has given up to me all his rights to the throne; he is going to retire to Compiègne with the Queen and some of his children."

He then goes on to say that the Infante Carlos[3] is suffering from an attack of the measles, and he almost accuses the unfortunate creature of falling ill on purpose.

"A few days before signing the treaty,[4] the Prince of the Asturias[5] returned the crown to King Charles. The grand-duke of Berg is appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom and president of all the juntas. An insurrection took place in Madrid on May 2nd. Thirty or forty thousand rioters assembled in the streets or took refuge in the houses and then began to fire from the windows. Two battalions of fusiliers belonging to my guard and four or five hundred horse brought them to reason. More than two thousand rebels were killed. I had six thousand troops in Madrid who could do nothing. We seized the opportunity afforded by this riot to disarm the inhabitants of Madrid."

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[1] *Ferdinand VII* (1784–1833): from his earliest years professed a deadly hatred for his parents' favourite, Godoy. This Spanish Hamlet was arrested as a conspirator by his own father in 1808; nevertheless, his father was soon after obliged to abdicate in his son's favour. On getting possession of the throne of Spain in 1813, he re-established the Inquisition and generally distinguished himself by his anti-liberal opinions.

[2] *Marie-Louise* (1754–1819): daughter of Philip, duke of Parma, completely ruled her husband and was in turn ruled by her lover. After her husband's abdication in 1808, she resided chiefly in Marseilles and Rome, where she eventually died, neglected and alone.

[3] *Don Carlos* (1788–1855): son of Charles IV of Spain, tried to get possession of the throne of Spain in 1834, but was unsuccessful. He retired to France, where he was shut up for some time at Bourges. He died at Triest.

[4] By which Joseph Bonaparte obtained the throne of Spain.

[5] The future king Ferdinand VII.

History tells us how useless was this measure. But as Eugène had no part in Spanish affairs, we will leave the amiable Spanish royal family fighting among themselves and endeavouring to avoid falling into the power of Joseph Bonaparte, whose previous attempts at governing another and equally unruly nation had not been particularly successful. *A propos* of Joseph's appointment to the throne of Spain, we will say that false hopes had been awakened in the breast of more than one member of the imperial family; for Jerôme, not content with the kingdom of Westphalia, would have much liked to be King of Spain. And then Josephine had her eye upon the kingdom of Naples for Eugène.

The following letter, written to Eugène by his brother-in-law, Louis Bonaparte, whose third son, Charles-Louis-Napoleon, later *Napoleon le Petit*, had been born in Paris on April 20th, would give us to suppose that Louis was less inimical towards Eugène than the other members of his family:

"AMSTERDAM, *May 7th*, 1808.

"My dear Brother—The Queen (Hortense) will doubtless have written to you from Paris the news of her happy delivery. However, I am glad to be able to inform you of the fact myself and to beg you not to forget me. I shall always take an interest in matters concerning your welfare."

But there was one person who was always ready to do Eugène a bad turn, and that person was Marmont, whose position as administrator of Dalmatia enabled him to annoy the viceroy in many ways. In a letter of reprimand, which Eugène was obliged to write about this time, we find an example of his conduct:

"MILAN, *May 22nd*, 1808.

"*M. le général-en-chef* Marmont—His Majesty commands me to write to you so that he may know exactly what has become of a sum of money which you deducted from the Italian war and navy budgets. Neither in Italy nor in France can sums of money be put to any use except that for which they are intended without a special order from the Ministers. As His Majesty has ordered me to draw up a report concerning this matter, I desire you to help me perform my task."

In June comes another letter from Napoleon concerning his old friend Pius VII, whom he seems anxious to conciliate :

"BAYONNE, *June 7th*, 1808.

"My Son—You must see that the Pope does not want for anything. This is what I wish you to do : From July 1st all the French and Italian troops now in the Papal States and in the March of Ancona must be paid, fed and clothed at the expense of France and Italy ; the Pope will in future only pay for such items as the heating and lighting of their barracks. The country's entire revenue is to be used to pay the interest of the national debt and the salaries of the different officials. The Pope is to receive not less than 150,000[1] francs a month for his household expenses. I shall wait before sending you further orders until I have heard from General Miollis, who will then tell me how much the interest upon the national debt amounts to, how much is spent every year for administering the kingdom, and what is the net revenue of that kingdom."

But the Pope was not content with this pittance, and naturally the unfortunate populace of Rome was expected to see that Saint Peter's Pence were not reduced in number. General Miollis seems to have been genuinely anxious not to overtax Napoleon's new subjects. But he had a difficult task before him. In the Emperor's next letter we learn how he proposed to treat any refractory ecclesiastics :

"BAYONNE, *July 17th*, 1808.

"My Son—I was glad to hear that you had made Cardinal Gabrielli, bishop of Sinigaglia, come to Milan. Keep him there. When you see him, ask him if he will take the oath prescribed by the concordat or not. If he will not take it you must send him to some monastery in the environs of Como or Novara, and you must deprive him of his temporalities, half of which must go to the hospitals in his diocese and the rest be used for restoring his churches. He is only to be allowed a pension of one thousand *écus*. All this must be done quietly. No decrees need be published. Any bishop or any other ecclesiastic who will not take the oath must be deprived of his possessions and only allowed a small pension ; his fortune must be used for charitable works—half for the hospitals and half for keeping the churches in repair. Be careful that the matter is not mentioned in the newspapers and that everything is done quietly."

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[1] 150,000 francs : *£60,000 a month.*

In July Eugène, having previously obtained his step-father's permission, started for a tour of inspection of Italy's three new provinces. He first went to Ancona, in which seaport some important works were in progress. He found his new subjects rather hostile ; some of Eugène's innovations, such as the conscription, had given offence ; and they complained that they were taxed too heavily. However, Eugène's very visible desire to be lenient soon won their confidence. He commanded various improvements to be made, several much-needed schools were built in Fermo, Macerata and Urbino ; he also declared the ports of Sinigaglia and Ancona free, and had new roads made.

On his return to Milan he reorganized his army and ordered an Exchange to be built in Milan ; several new schools were also opened.

Early in August, Napoleon received an intimation from Eugène that he hoped that his wife would soon make him a father for a second time. Whereupon Napoleon writes off to his " daughter " :

"*August* 18*th*, 1808.

" My Daughter—I thank you for all the kind things you said in your birthday letter to me. I am always glad to hear that you love me. Never doubt my affection for you. *How is the little prince getting on ?*" (The last sentence is written in the Emperor's own hand.)

Alas ! the little prince changed his mind at the last moment and turned out to be another little princess.

Notwithstanding the fact that Tuscany was now occupied by French troops under the command of General Menou,[1] that country still continued in an unsettled condition. Its inhabitants were anxious to throw off the hated Napoleonic yoke. Although a tremendous amount of smuggling still went on, the continental system was slowly ruining Leghorn, whose chief customer for some years had been England.

Napoleon now made an excuse of the many disturbances which took place towards the end of 1808 in order to take back from the widowed Queen of Etruria the possessions which she owed to the conqueror of Europe, unite those possessions to France, and make his sister Elisa grand-duchess of Tuscany, which he did early in the following year.

Eugène had but a small rôle in these transactions; his share was limited to repressing any efforts at rebellion against the Emperor's orders.

The last few months had been productive of several successes to the French army in Spain, where Joseph Bonaparte's position was assured for the present, thanks to his brother's interview with the Emperor Alexander of Russia and several German princes at Erfurt.

During the last weeks of the old year (1808) Eugène made an expedition to Friuli, where he reviewed his troops and ascertained that matters were going smoothly. Shortly after his return home Augusta gave birth to a second daughter (December 23rd), who was baptized Hortense Eugénie. The arrival of another daughter was doubtless a disappointment to both parents. As for Napoleon, the birth of a third son to Hortense had considerably weakened his interest in the sex of Eugène's progeny.

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[1] *Menou*, Jean-François, baron de (1750–1810): although a noble by birth, fought for the Republic; he was a favourite with Bonaparte, with whom he made the Egyptian campaign. He was appointed Governor of Venice, where he died.

CHAPTER VIII

Eugène endeavours to pacify the Pope—Austria prepares for another war—Eugène receives command of the *armée d'Italie*—His defeat at Sacile is followed by several successes—The *armée d'Italie* joins the Grand Army—Eugène goes to Vienna and is then ordered to subdue Hungary—He does so and returns to the Austrian capital—Peace is signed between the two Emperors.

THE year 1809 was to be one of the most eventful years in Eugène's life, for he was now called upon to show whether he had profited by what he had seen of his step-father's methods of waging war or not.

The first three months were passed by the young couple in Milan, Eugène being occupied with various matters of government, such as the vexed question of paper money—which question still exists, as every traveller in Italy knows to his cost—the still existing tax upon salt, and the advisability of reducing the area devoted to the culture of rice, an industry which was producing disastrous results owing to the malaria engendered by the huge rice-marshes ; Augusta, like the good mother she was, was well occupied bringing up her two little daughters.

Rome was still in a very unsettled condition. General Miollis had his hands full trying to keep peace with the Pope, who now imagined he was about to strike his enemy through one of that enemy's neighbours. When, on January 1st, 1809, Cardinal Severoli, the Papal nuncio at Vienna, wrote to Pius VII informing him that he had persuaded Francis I of Austria[1] to go to war against Napoleon, he knew that he was telling the Holy Father something which would give him great satisfaction. The Pope, emboldened by this good news, immediately forbade the faithful to take part in the

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[1] Mr. F. Loraine Petre's work, entitled *Napoleon and the Archduke Charles* (John Lane, 1909), contains a most complete account of this campaign.

EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS

From the portrait at Arenenberg. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Co.

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carnival which began that year on February 5th, and ordered prayers to be said in all the churches as a sign of public mourning for the disasters which had fallen on the Church.

Eugène's heart was now rejoiced by a very pleasant announcement which showed him that his step-father considered him competent to fill the post: he was made commander-in-chief of the *armée d'Italie.* At last he was to have his wish and see service again. But, as in 1805, Napoleon wished Austria to take the first step. Indeed, it was his express order to Eugène not to concentrate his troops, thus leaving him unprepared for what was to come, which occasioned the viceroy's defeat at Sacile. The Emperor writes:

"PARIS, *January 26th,* 1809.

"My Son—You have doubtless received a letter which I wrote to you while I was at Valladolid and which was sent to you from Bayonne by a messenger. As Austria has done nothing so far, *you must do nothing,* at least, nothing ostensible. Write and tell Marmont that I am back in Paris; that Austria, contrary to our expectations, has done nothing so far; that we must keep a good watch, but do nothing in a hurry. Numerous detachments are crossing the Alps to join you; more will start in February, in order to reinforce your army so that all may be ready, as I have already informed you, and that the regiments may be prepared to begin operations in May or June. I long to hear that the 4th battalions of the regiments of the *armée de Dalmatie* and the *armée de Corfou* have arrived in Italy."

In one of Cardinal Severoli's letters to Pius VII, that astute diplomatist informs the Holy Father that England has been urging Austria to go to war with France ever since the previous October. There were many English subjects scattered about the kingdom of Italy, as we have already seen; that they were willing to lend their aid to any discontented with Eugène's rule is proved by the following letter written by the latter to his step-father:

"MILAN, *February 14th,* 1809.

"Sire—I hasten to inform Your Majesty that ten Englishmen, who had been taken prisoner on the coast of Istria, have been set free by the captain of the royal battalion of

Istria, into whose charge they had been given and who then took refuge, together with his prisoners, three guards and two civil servants belonging to the government of Capo d'Istria, on board an English vessel. I ordered all these deserters to be judged by default, and I commanded very strict inquiry to be made as to whether any ramifications of the plot existed. Several letters from Triest proving the existence of a conspiracy have been intercepted. The persons to whom these letters were addressed have been arrested ; we have discovered that the English have several agents in Triest who organize and direct all these conspiracies. The captain had promised the English to entice away a great number of his soldiers ; he was to arrest the brigadier-general commanding the province, the prefect, the commander of the battalion, who is an Italian, and the few Italian officers in the province. The rebels were to burn all ship-timber, destroy everything they could get hold of, embark on English vessels and sail for Malta, where an Italian battalion is being formed, in which they would have been given superior rank to that which they already occupy. Although it is doubtless easier to conceive such a plan than to carry it out, Your Majesty will understand from this statement that the royal battalion of Istria cannot stay in the country any longer, and that the safety of this province is compromised. I am immediately sending the battalion of the 3rd Italian infantry regiment, which is now at Palmanova, to Triest ; and I propose to Your Majesty to send the battalion of Istria to Dalmatia, which will enable General Marmont to fortify his garrisons. I need not tell Your Majesty that I have ordered steps to be taken to prevent the enemy carrying out their plans."

A few weeks later the captains of two Italian vessels who had incurred the viceroy's anger by surrendering to the English, were taken prisoner, condemned to death and shot. When informing his step-father of these two executions, Eugène says : " I hope that this will be the last lesson we shall have to give our Italian navy."

In his next letter Napoleon again repeats his mistaken conviction that the Austrians will do nothing until the end of April at the earliest ; he also makes another mistaken statement when he asserts that Russia will not join Austria: Russia's attitude towards Austria was at that time similar to that of the monkey in La Fontaine's fable who makes use of his friend the cat to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. And, as in the fable:

> "Raton n'était pas content, ce dit-on.
> Aussi ne le sont pas la plupart de ces princes,
> Qui, flattés d'un pareil emploi,
> Vont s'échauder en des provinces
> Pour le profit de quelque roi."

Eleven days after writing the above-mentioned letter, Napoleon puts the date of Austria's probable attack still later:

"PARIS, *March 27th*, 1809.

"My Son—I received your letter dated the 22nd inst., at two o'clock this morning. I entirely approve of all you have done. I told you that I thought that things would not alter much during the month of April. Although the Austrians threaten a great deal, they have not attacked us yet, *and I still think that they will not be in a position to do so before the middle of May*."

Meanwhile Austria had been straining every nerve to make a threefold attack in Bavaria, Italy and the duchy of Warsaw. On March 1st the French ambassador to Vienna, Andréossy[1] by name, quitted that city, nominally in order to take a holiday, but probably because he saw that a rupture was inevitable. All sorts of ridiculous rumours were being circulated in Vienna. It was said that the French troops in Spain had been annihilated, that England had disembarked fourteen regiments of soldiers in that country, and that King Joseph had been forced to fly for his life. And then somebody, who probably knew what he was talking about, added: "Russia is going to support Austria."

Eugène, reassured by his step-father's repeated assertions that Austria would do nothing definite until the middle of May, limited his preparations for war to drawing up his troops in echelons between the Adige and the Isonzo.[2]

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[1] *Andréossy*, Antoine François (1761–1828): was one of the most distinguished artillery officers in Europe during the Empire. He occupied several important diplomatic posts, was a member of the *Institut d'Egypte* and the *Académie des Sciences*.

[1] The Isonzo was the river which, as a natural frontier, divided Austria from Italy in those days.

One or two historians assure us that Napoleon had but a poor opinion of his step-son's military talents; and to prove this assertion they point out the fact that Napoleon, in 1805, not only sent Jourdan to Eugène to act as his mentor in military matters, but that he also sent Macdonald[1] in the same capacity in 1809. But we must not forget that four years had passed since 1805, and that those four years had been full of experiences for Eugène. The following letter from the Emperor to his step-son would seem to show that Napoleon had a high opinion of the viceroy's talents; he speaks as if Eugène was to be the master—the commander, and as if Macdonald's rôle was to be limited to that of a subordinate:

"PARIS, *April 2nd*, 1809.

"My Son—I have given General Macdonald orders to join the *armée d'Italie;* he will arrive immediately. This officer is brave and talented; but I am not very sure about his politics. However, matters have changed of late somewhat. I hope that he will do his best to serve you, and that he will win honour in the land whither his talents and past services have called him. I have said nothing to him. He is to be employed as a *général de division*, and you can give him command of a wing of the army. This favour, which he will owe to your kindness, will ensure his fidelity."

Notwithstanding Eugène's warnings to his step-father that the Austrians were fortifying the left bank of the Isonzo, that the inhabitants of Laybach, Gorizia, Villach and Tarvis were in a very excited condition, and that French subjects travelling in Austria were subjected to all sorts of indignities, the Emperor does not seem to have realized that war was so near.

In the beginning of April, fully six weeks before Napoleon had expected her to do so, Austria began to rise in the Tyrol under the guidance of that brave innkeeper-soldier, Andreas

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[1] *Macdonald*, Etienne-Jacques-Joseph-Alexandre (1765–1840): duc de Tarente, and *maréchal de France*, first served in Dillon's Irish regiment; he then fought with distinction under Napoleon's flag. The Emperor alludes in the above letter to Macdonald's defence of Moreau in 1804 when he incurred the Emperor's displeasure. His conduct, however, at Wagram and at many subsequent battles blotted out all past offences. His political opinions, after the Emperor's downfall, were distinctly those of a constitutionalist.

(Photo : Neurdein)

NAPOLEON I WOUNDED OUTSIDE RATISBON

From the picture by Gautherot

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Hofer.[1] Eugène, now commander-in-chief of the *armée d'Italie*, left Milan, having said good-bye to his beloved Augusta and the two little daughters, and started for Udine, where he was to establish his head-quarters. He immediately published a proclamation to his army in which he said:

" Generals, officers, soldiers! you bear the title of the *armée d'Italie!* What more need I say? Does not this title, with its memories of glorious deeds in the past, command you to imitate those deeds? For long you have felt your inactivity and chafed under it. But now, thanks to your enemies, the day of glory is dawning for you! . . ."

Eugène's energetic behaviour seems to have come as a surprise to Austria, for Napoleon says in a letter written to his adopted son from Paris, April 4th: " Those gentlemen (the Austrian government) thought that you were unprepared for war; but your conduct has proved to them that you have plenty of troops to back you up. Do your very best to intimidate Triest. . . ."

Eugène travelled through Brescia and Verona, where he reviewed his troops. In the latter town he found a letter from his adoptive father written in a short, concise style, much to the point, like his commands delivered in a tone which brooked no denial, waiting for him:

" PARIS, *April 6th*, 1809.

" My Son—Who is a certain poet named Carpani[2] who is now with the archduke Johann?[3] Have his family arrested; and if he has any property, confiscate it."

But before repairing to Udine, Eugène had orders to go and see what was happening in the Tyrol; this he did most thoroughly, riding and walking over 250 miles. After reviewing more troops outside Vicenza and inspecting the fortifications of that town he moved on to Udine. Notwithstanding the fact that his spies assured him that a war could no longer be avoided, he himself still hoped and, until April 10th, continued to hope that Austria would recall the archduke Johann. But a few hours later all doubts were laid at rest when the latter sent a warning to the French outposts that he had received orders from his Emperor to advance and to treat as enemies any troops trying to stop him doing so. Not only did he advance, but he attacked Eugène's troops in the valley of the Fella that very same day.

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[1] *Hofer*, Andreas (1767–1810): this brave patriot chased the Bavarians from the Tyrol and destroyed several French detachments. Having fallen into the hands of the French in 1810 he was taken to Mantua and shot. The Emperor of Austria ennobled his family in 1819.

[2] *Carpani*, Giuseppe (1752–1825): poet and musician of some celebrity. As a pupil of the Jesuits he supported the Catholic Church by every means which lay in his power. He was a great admirer of the archduke Johann, who persuaded him to settle in Vienna. He was an accomplished linguist and translated very well from the French and German languages.

[3] *Johann*, Baptiste Fabien Sebastian, archduke of Austria (1782–1859?): brother of the archduke Karl, was no less talented as a soldier than as a diplomatist. Ferdinand I, after his flight to Innsbruck, made him his lieutenant-general, a post which he filled with great ability.

Eugène immediately sent word to the Senate in Milan that the Austrian Cabinet had declared war, assured the people of Italy that he should do everything he could to protect their country and ended by begging Napoleon's subjects to have confidence in him.

The archduke Johann's first attack was unsuccessful, notwithstanding the fact that Eugène's troops were unprepared to fight so soon.

The first serious engagement between the Italian and Austrian armies resulted in a victory for the viceroy. In a charming letter to his wife he tells her that the enemy debouched in great numbers on every side, but that his troops were ready this time and able to take two hundred prisoners and disable from five to six hundred men.

Throughout this campaign Eugène wrote constantly to his wife. We would gladly reproduce these letters, but limited space will prevent us doing so. These letters are all contained in M. Albert Pulitzer's most charming work, *Le Roman du Prince Eugène*. Eugène's task was not altogether an easy one about this time, for he found that some of his generals, General Lamarque[1] in particular, were discontented at having to obey a commander-in-chief so much younger than themselves.

Napoleon's letters to his step-son became even more numerous with the declaration of war; he often wrote two and sometimes three letters on the same day, letters in which he tries, though far away from the seat of war, to guide his " son " to victory, gives him the advantage of his prodigious knowledge of tactics, praises him, encourages him, and scolds him for not writing three times a day to him.

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[1] *Lamarque*, Maximilien, comte de (1772–1832): distinguished himself during the wars of the Revolution and in Italy under Eugène. He was elected deputy during the Restoration, when he became immensely popular with the Opposition party.

" PARIS, *April 12th*, 1809.

" My Son—You will have learnt, on reaching Verona or Trent, that the Austrians had begun hostilities, and that you will probably have to make your head-quarters in Friuli. The telegraph only informed me that the Austrians had crossed the Inn and, by so doing, declared war. . . . Leave your cavalry and about twelve thousand men on the banks of the Isonzo and proceed with the rest of your army to Tarvis. Leave nothing to chance ; be careful to avoid the intrenchments which the enemy are sure to have made, so that you do not break your nose against the walls of their redoubts."

And now Eugène was to experience his first defeat, and it was a bitter grief and disappointment to him. This defeat must be attributed to two causes, one of which was independent of his will. The first mistake was made by Napoleon when he miscalculated the date of Austria's attack and forbade Eugène to concentrate his troops in Friuli, thus leaving him unprepared for war ; the second mistake was made by Eugène, who, counting upon the support of General Lamarque, returned the enemy's attack without waiting for that general, who had been unable to join the army at Sacile owing to the terrible rains which had caused great floods in the north of Italy. How well the Emperor read Eugène's character when he accused him of acting too precipitately ! Rash he may have been : rashness in warfare is courage carried to its extreme limit. But we must protest when M. Thiers calls him *timid*, as he did when speaking of the viceroy of Italy. However, M. Thiers was not always quite fair in his judgment of others : did he not call one of France's greatest patriots *a raving lunatic ?*

On April 14th the Austrians attacked Eugène's army in large numbers. Three of the viceroy's battalions were captured. Eugène, well aware of the inferiority of his cavalry to that of the archduke Johann, undismayed by this check, tried to recover lost ground and returned the Austrians' attack. He succeeded for a time and managed to drive the enemy, who fought very bravely, back to Porcia. The archduke Johann did not lose courage ; gathering all his forces together, he returned Eugène's attack with so much determination that by five o'clock on April 16th Eugène was obliged to beat a retreat and acknowledge himself vanquished. During this battle the French army lost 6500 men : 3000 killed and wounded ; 3500 prisoners. Generals Severoli, Garreau, Teste, Pagès and Dutruy were among the wounded.

At the news of this disaster a handful of discontented Italian patriots hurried back to Milan, where they endeavoured to profit by Eugène's defeat in order to make the populace rise against the "French tyrant" and prevent him returning to the capital. But the vice-reine displayed such unexpected firmness on this occasion that this effort at a revolution came to naught.

The day before the battle of Sacile, Napoleon wrote the following letter, which arrived too late, alas ! to prevent the disaster :

"STRASBURG, *April* 15*th*, 1809.

"My Son—I am now at Strasburg. I wrote to you from Paris. Threaten as much as you like, but don't be in a hurry over anything, and go carefully. The Austrians had not passed Maldorf on the 12th. I suppose that the band of 5000 troops coming up from Italy and advancing towards the Tyrol has retreated and has not continued its march towards Inspruck (*sic*), which town the Austrians will have probably occupied before it can get there. The Empress is at Strasburg. I cross the Rhine in an hour's time. I shall leave the Austrians masters of the situation in the Tyrol for the time being so that I may catch them in a trap. If they are driven your way, take care to have ten boats ready armed at Peschiera so as to cut off any retreat by the lake."[1]

Eugène now had a most painful task to perform : he had to write and confess to his step-father that he had done the very thing he had been told not to do : he had acted too precipitately ! In his grief he turned to his wife and wrote her all about his fiasco and, at the same time, warned her that she might have to seek refuge in flight.

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[1] The lake of Garda.

"Treviso, *April 18th*, 1809. *Midday.*

"I was in despair when I wrote to you yesterday, my good Augusta, because I saw that our army had been completely routed. I feel calmer to-day and better able to look the future in the face. The enemy have not profited by their advantage, whereas I have profited by their stupidity and have been able to rally my troops. We shall still have every reason to hope for better things if only the news from the Tyrol is good. So be calm, my good Augusta. If, notwithstanding all my efforts to prevent them, the enemy should descend from the Tyrol and advance towards Verona or Brescia, you must take steps to leave Milan and go to Turin or even Lyons; but this is only in case something very unexpected should happen. Good-bye, my dear Augusta; I tremble for your health; I fear that this news may make you ill, and I long to hear from you."

There was one person who was delighted by the news of Eugène's defeat, and that was Pius VII, who bore no particular spite to the viceroy; on the contrary, he rather liked him, but who looked beyond the servant to the master, and considered this disaster as a punishment from Heaven, as in our own days many disasters attended with great loss of life in France have been considered by the clergy of the country as Heaven-sent.[1]

We find that Eugène says in the above letter that the enemy did not profit by the advantages gained at Sacile. The news of Napoleon's wonderful success, the knowledge that he was now marching upon Vienna, had fallen like a thunderbolt upon the Austrian troops.

Napoleon's one idea on hearing of Eugène's defeat was to prevent the Austrians crossing the Piave. Again and again in his letters he repeats that Eugène must not abandon that natural barrier, that he must protect it at all costs; but, notwithstanding all his step-father's behests, Eugène was forced to retreat before the archduke Johann, whose troops, having been allowed to rest for three days after the victory of Sacile, drove him back and back until he reached the banks of the Adige. He now had to strain every nerve to prevent the Austrians coming any farther. Venice was well protected, but Padua had already fallen into the enemy's hands and was occupied by a body of Austrian troops numbering about three thousand men. In one of those fits of frenzied courage for which French soldiers have always been famous, a detachment of dragoons, thirteen souls in all, determined, under the guidance of a sergeant named Fourré, to give the Austrians a good fright. This little band boldly marched up to the gates of Padua, and, although greeted by a discharge of musketry, cared naught, but marched on, overturning the sentinels, battering open the gates and rushing through the town with the rapidity of a whirlwind. Thirteen went in: only eight came out alive. . . . It was a foolish escapade, doubtless, but it deserves to be recorded. The Austrians, thinking that the foolhardy little band was the forerunner of a large body of troops, flew to their guns and began preparations for an attack—which did not come off.

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[1] We need only quote one instance: shortly after the fire at the *Bazar de la Charité*, when so many French aristocrats perished in the flames, a priest in a fashionable Paris church preached a sermon in which he spoke of this disaster as a punishment from Heaven. All the victims were Catholics, and presumably royalists.

Eugène was now joined by General Macdonald, who met him at Vicenza, where he was reorganizing his army and preparing to attack the archduke Johann again.

On reaching Vicenza, Macdonald was waited upon by one of the viceroy's aides-de-camp with a request that he would come and see him at once. Macdonald found Eugène in a state of profound depression.

"I have been beaten at the very beginning of my career as commander-in-chief," cried Eugène; "it is true that my troops occupied an unfavourable position. The Emperor, who knows Italy so thoroughly, will be indignant."

"Who persuaded you to give battle?" asked Macdonald. "Why did you take up such a bad position in a narrow gorge which, had you been obliged to flee, would have certainly proved the ruin of your army? You may think yourself very lucky not to have had a more enterprising enemy. Had you been fighting against any other general, the salvation of your whole army would have been compromised."

"It is true," confessed Eugène, "that I gave in too easily to the complaints and observations of the Emperor's subjects; they all crowded round me, begging me not to abandon this position without striking a blow ; then the army grumbled because it was retreating without having measured swords with the troops which it had so often beaten. I asked the advice of all the bravest and most esteemed generals."

"Take good care not to act so hastily again ! " remarked Macdonald ; "you see what a tight corner you have put yourself into. Where are you going now, and what do you intend to do ? "

Eugène was obliged to confess that his soldiers were no less depressed then he was, and they were anxious to retreat as soon as possible.

On asking where the enemy were, Macdonald was informed that they were about three marches distant.

"What ! " cried he, "three marches distant ? And what would you do if they were on your heels ? Show me your maps and let us see what we can concoct together."

Having examined the maps of the surrounding country, Eugène and Macdonald decided to make a stand at Caldiero. But Macdonald, older and more experienced than Eugène, trusted to the news of the Emperor's success to decide the events of the next few days. He said :

"You will see that the whole question will be settled in Germany ; and you will learn the good or bad results, not from couriers, but from your adversary's movements. If the archduke Johann's movements are rapid, the enemy are victorious ; if their movements are slow, as at present, nothing decisive has happened ; if they are beaten, you will see your adversary draw back, because he will not wish to run the risk of having all communication with the capital cut off, neither will he wish to be isolated by the victorious army. . . . If you abandon the favourable position which you now occupy, the enemy will follow you. Where will you stop ? On the banks of some river, or in the Alps ? But if the Emperor is successful, and if he sends you orders to take the offensive again, you will have to try and force a crossing over the river. Will you succeed with an army which is a prey to depression ? It is scarcely likely. So do not let us run the risk unless absolutely obliged to do so ; let us defend the country foot by foot without compromising ourselves in any way. Do not let us risk a second battle, and do not let us undertake anything unless we are sure of success."

Eugène was quite ready to allow that Macdonald's advice was far more sensible than that which had led to the disaster of Sacile. At Macdonald's suggestion he summoned all his generals to meet him at a certain hour and discuss the situation. But before doing so he warned Macdonald that he could not depend upon all his generals.

"Look!" said he, going to the window and pointing at a little group which was listening to a general who seemed very excited; "look! although that fellow had absolutely nothing to do during the last engagement he is in a greater hurry to make off than any other member of the army, and he is trying to persuade his comrades to follow his example."

The interview with the generals was not very encouraging. General Grenier made no secret of the fact that the army was in a state of profound discouragement.

"Prince," said he to Eugène, "nobody seems to have taken into consideration the fact that the army is at present thoroughly disorganized and very depressed. It is my duty to inform you that my own division is in such a state that I will not answer for its behaviour until it has had a thorough rest."

However, Eugène determined to try and obliterate the memory of the fiasco at Sacile by winning an important victory. At Macdonald's suggestion he sent for a young general who was anxious to distinguish himself, and told him to hold the bridge of Vicenza at all costs. The viceroy, in his agitation, did not give his orders very clearly; the young general, although he had not half understood Eugène's commands, was too timid to say so, but retired, promising to do his duty. Macdonald perceived what was the matter and called the young man back before he had had time to leave the viceroy's quarters. On being requested to repeat the commander-in-chief's commands, the unfortunate general hesitated and gave such an embarrassed reply that Eugène saw what he had done and hastened to reiterate his instructions, this time being careful to make his meaning clear. It was a good lesson for the future.

Eugène's army took some time to recover its equilibrium. The stand made outside Vicenza was not accomplished without much trouble to Eugène and his troops; the latter were within an ace of flying upon more than one occasion.

The characters of Eugène and Macdonald were unfortunately dissimilar, for Eugène always found it a difficult matter to restrain his ardour, while Macdonald erred perhaps on the side of cautiousness ; strange to say, both accused each other of rashness.

Having defended Vicenza successfully, Eugène's courage returned, and victory with it, for, on April 24th, his army met that of the archduke Johann, beat it and drove it northward.

The insurrection in the Tyrol was spreading in every direction ; troops of armed peasants were marching towards Italy under the command of General Chasteler.[1] General Baraguey d'Hilliers[2] was chosen to go and quell that beautiful country, which had never forgiven Napoleon for disposing of some of its territory against its will to Eugène's father-in-law, the King of Bavaria.

On April 28th Eugène learnt of his step-father's success at Abensberg, where the Emperor, eight days before, had won a most brilliant victory over the archduke Karl. The news of this victory was like a powerful tonic to Eugène and his troops ; the viceroy immediately ordered a salvo to be fired.

But this same news was received with dismay by Pius VII, who now became seriously alarmed lest the Emperor, when at leisure, should punish him for his *intransigeance ;* and so he had the gates of the Quirinal palace so barred and barricaded that, had he been expecting to be besieged by the entire Grand Army, he could not have taken more precautions ; in fact, he imitated the doges of old, and placed seven doors between himself and the outer world.

On April 30th the left wing of Eugène's army, under

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[1] *Chasteler,* Jean Gabriel, marquis de (1763–1825) : a French *émigré* who went to Austria, where he entered the army and became a very distinguished general ; he played an important part throughout the war of 1809–10. Napoleon endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to take him prisoner ; had he done so, General Chasteler would probably have shared the fate of the duc d'Enghien.

[2] *Baraguey d'Hilliers,* Louis (1764–1812) : fought with great valour under the Republican flag and in Egypt, Italy and Austria. He incurred Napoleon's anger in 1812 for surrendering to a Russian officer. The Emperor ordered him to return to France and submit to be tried by a court-martial. The general was obeying his master when he fell ill and died, on the way home, in Berlin from an illness caused by grief at having been unsuccessful.

General Sorbier,[1] met the Austrian troops near Badia; although badly wounded, Sorbier continued to direct his men and was able to inflict severe punishment upon the enemy, who lost 800 men and were compelled to fly.

May 2nd saw Eugène on the way to recovering all the ground he had lost. We learn from a letter written to his wife on this date that "the Emperor was not *too* angry about the battle he had lost." He concludes with this expressive sentence: "We are all very glad to advance; I fancy one or two people will be rather surprised to see us turn up again."

The Austrians had burnt all the bridges over the Brenta, which obliged Eugène's troops to construct rafts on which to cross the swollen river.

On May 4th the Austrians made a determined stand by the bridge of Bassano, but they met with no better success than on September 9th, 1796, when General Bonaparte had the honour of beating them. If we look at the map of Italy, we shall see that the tide had turned for Eugène and that, after having been forced to retreat to Vicenza, he was now about to drive the Austrians out of the kingdom of Italy.

On the morrow Eugène had another success outside Caldiero, inflicting severe losses upon the enemy and taking 1100 prisoners at a loss to himself of 120 men.

From Napoleon, who was sweeping all obstacles out of his path and striding towards Vienna, comes another letter reprimanding his step-son for not keeping him advised of his plans and their failure or success:

"ENNS, *May 6th*, 1809.

"My Son—I have had no news from you to-day. My outposts are now at Amstetten. We shall reach Vienna in a few days. I am quite in the dark concerning the movements of the *armée d'Italie*. The Austrians declare that they have captured three eagles from you, taken 16 cannons and 6000 prisoners. Your letters tell me nothing; I don't know whether these reports are true or false. I also want to have news concerning the army against which you are fighting. You ought to write three times a day, and yet you only write once a week to me! I sent a messenger to you the day before yesterday to inform you that I had captured 7000 prisoners when crossing the Traun. I hope by the time this letter reaches you that you will have sent me the news I long to hear."

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[1] *Sorbier*, Barthélemont de (1762–1827): served in the regiment of *La Fère* with the young Bonaparte, won a victory over the Austrians in 1793, but was shortly after deprived of his rank as captain as a *suspect*. He re-entered the army, however, and went through all Napoleon's campaigns, with honour to himself and his troops. With the return of the Bourbons he retired into private life.

The Austrians retreated as far as Cima d'Olmo, where they gave battle to the viceroy. This engagement, which is known to historians as the *Battle of the Piave*, was most disastrous to Austria, who lost 10,000 men in one day and saw the remnant of her army obliged to fly far into the night, hotly pursued by Eugène's troops who were intoxicated with this success.

In a letter from General Caffarelli[1] to Duroc, dated May 9th, from Conegliano we find a pleasant testimony in favour of the commander-in-chief:

"The Prince behaved like a worthy son of the Emperor. I admired his coolness and presence of mind; the only fault I could find with him was that he was too brave. The day's events closed with cries of: 'Long live the Emperor!' uttered by the massed troops."

Eugène finds time to write a brief account of this his first important victory to his wife, Augusta:

"CONEGLIANO, *May 9th*, 1809.

"At last we have won a victory, my good and tender Augusta. I hope that the Emperor will be content with our behaviour. We made a very bold attack yesterday, for my army crossed the Piave right in front of the Austrian troops, whom we routed completely; three-quarters of my men had no need to discharge their guns. The cavalry covered themselves with glory. The result of the battle was as follows: 14 cannons and 25 or 30 baggage-waggons captured, 3000 prisoners taken, including 2 generals, 8 staff-officers and 40 or 50 other officers, besides which they had

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[1] *Caffarelli*, Auguste (1766–1849): was colonel of the consular guard after the 18th *Brumaire*, then aide-de-camp to Bonaparte in 1800. He was made Governor of the Tuileries for some time; from 1806 to 1810 he was head of the War Office for the kingdom of Italy. Napoleon made him count of the French Empire.

2 generals killed and 3 badly wounded. Let Milan hear of this good news ; I trust it will give satisfaction.

"Adieu, my friend, I am going to try and follow up our success."

On May 11th Eugène's troops crossed the Tagliamento, and arrived close to Villanova, which, after another battle, was captured without much difficulty, while the enemy, having left 1500 troops in Eugène's power, together with the flag of Kieski's regiment, fled towards Gorizia.

Lamarque, who had just occupied Udine most successfully, was now summoned by Macdonald to join him on the banks of the Isonzo and help him and Marmont, who was coming from Dalmatia, drive the Austrian invader back to his own country.

On May 11th these generals added another victory to their list of successes, and a few days later the *armée d'Italie* reached the valley of the Fella, the scene of Austria's invasion six weeks ago.

In all Eugène's letters written to his wife about this time he makes mention of his desire to hear that the Emperor is content : "I shall be rewarded for all my trouble if only the Emperor is pleased" ; and again : "I hope that the Emperor is satisfied now ; I myself am very content."

On the morrow Desaix defeated the Austrian army outside Malborghetto, pursued it through Tarvis and did not cease harassing it until near Villach.

We cannot refrain from giving in Eugène's own words the account of this engagement, the success of which was due to his determination to give battle immediately :

"PONTEBBA, *May 17th*, 1809. *Midnight.*

"I hasten, my good Augusta, to inform you of some very good news. The 17th May will be one of the most glorious days in the annals of the *armée d'Italie*. This morning we captured a fort which was very difficult to take ; nevertheless our grenadiers carried it at the point of the bayonet. Nearly the entire garrison was put to the edge of the sword ; we were only able to take 300 prisoners. I immediately started in order to join our outposts, whom I found at Tarvis ; I soon caught sight of the enemy. I perceived that the Austrians were preparing to attack us either to-night or to-morrow morning. Although only two hours of daylight remained, I ordered my men to attack, which deed was accomplished by my right wing, formed of the Italian division under Fontanelli's command. The attack was so sudden and so successful that the rest of my troops hardly required to discharge their guns. We chased the enemy in the greatest disorder for six miles, bearing hard upon them all the time. I cannot give you the sum total of this day's work, but we have certainly taken two or three thousand prisoners, 20 to 25 cannons, and Heaven knows what we may not pick up to-morrow. The affair was sharp: about 300 of our troops are *hors de combat.* The enemy's bullets positively ploughed up the ground upon which we were standing.

"I hope the Emperor will be satisfied. I myself am very content. I will tell you in confidence that I am all the more pleased because nobody thought it wise of me to attack, as the enemy were so well intrenched; however, I would be obeyed, and the result proved that I was perfectly right: a few hours later and we should have been beaten. I am well; I have not closed my eyes for several nights, but everything is going on splendidly. Adieu, my good Augusta; tell your Court of this good news, and love me as I love you."

On the morrow the fort of Pradel, in the vicinity of Villach, was captured by the *armée d'Italie* under General Séras. The scenes enacted during this operation were truly terrible. The fort having refused to capitulate, Séras' troops set fire to it and every brave soldier in the place perished in the flames. The scene which took place at Malborghetto a few days before was no less awful, for the village caught fire while being stormed; the heat from the burning Malborghetto was so great that Eugène and his troops who were stationed at the other end of the valley which was also wrapped in flames, were nearly obliged to fly.

General Lamarque then pushed on to Laybach, which town he, with the help of Macdonald, forced to surrender.

Although Napoleon's and Eugène's successes had reduced Pius VII to silence, if not to submission, his clergy do not seem to have been equally crushed, from the following letter written by Eugène to his step-father in a very laudable desire to shield a well-meaning but much-deluded prelate from the Emperor's displeasure :

"FRIESACH, *May 24th*, 1809.

"Sire—I have received Your Majesty's commands concerning the archbishop of Udine. I should not have waited to act if this prelate had been as guilty as report first said. He had received *written* commands to sing a *Te Deum*, and to have prayers said for the *success of the Austrian troops*.

"He sang the *Te Deum ;* but in the address to his diocesans, which he had printed, he forbore to tell them to pray for the success of the Austrian army ; he merely told them 'to implore the protection and succour of Heaven in present circumstances.'

"This was doubtless his way—that is to say, an Italian's way—of getting out of a tight corner ; but it seems to me that it proves that the prayers were not ordered to be said by the archbishop with any bad intention, but only because he was *obliged to do so*.

"I may add that the archbishop's conduct prior to this incident had always caused me to consider him as rather a pusillanimous person, but nevertheless a thoroughly loyal subject, and a good priest.

"This incident shows me that I was not mistaken in my judgment of his character. In fact, I hear that when Prince Johann[1] summoned him to his presence, he appeared *wearing his order of the Iron Crown ;* and that during the short conversation which took place between these two persons the archbishop said he was proud to owe this honour to Your Majesty's bounty.

"I sharply admonished the prelate for his weakness—so severely, in fact, that he was quite overwhelmed, and I fear that he is still very depressed. There are cowards and weak-minded men in every corner of your kingdom of Italy, but there are few traitors, and none at all among the landowners and wealthy families. . . ."

On May 24th eight English men-of-war appeared in the bay of Triest, where they remained within gun-shot, as if to bombard that port at any moment. Eugène tells us in his memoirs that the English boats refrained from bombarding

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[1] The archduke Johann of Austria.

Triest because they saw that the inhabitants were determined to defend themselves and give back as good as they got. We also learn that the little fleet remained outside Triest until July 5th, when Napoleon's continued successes forced them to realize that they were only wasting their time.

Eugène having reached Klagenfurt and taken that stronghold, wisely decided to wait there until he had news from his step-father and until he heard that Macdonald had left Laybach and was on his way to join him.

Although commander-in-chief of the *armée d'Italie*, Eugène had to endure one or two discomforts with the rest of his men, for he tells his wife that, somebody having lost his great-coat for him, he finds himself in the midst of that terribly rainy spring "like a little Saint John with only one coat to his back," and no prospect of being able to change his damp clothes for the time being, as the carriages containing his trunks are two days' march behind the army.

The Austrians were now fleeing in all directions. In order to prevent some of the archduke's troops joining the main body of the Austrian army from which they had got separated, Eugène sent General Grouchy[1] to drive them towards Volkermarkt and Marburg, while he himself pushed on to Leoben, where he fought a splendid battle with the Austrian general, Jellachich,[2] which battle, by preventing the archduke Johann effecting a junction with his compatriot, destroyed all Austria's hopes of checking the viceroy's advance. During this battle, which lasted barely three hours, Austria's army, although numbering seven or eight thousand troops and occupying a splendid position under the command of the redoubtable Jellachich, lost 800 killed, 1200 wounded, and 4500 prisoners, including 70 officers.

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[1] *Grouchy*, Emmanuel, marquis de (1766–1847): a brave soldier under the Republic and the Empire. At the battle of Novi he received fourteen wounds, and was wounded on other occasions. During the *Cent-Jours* he took the duc d'Angoulême prisoner and received the marshal's bâton as his reward. His forced inactivity at the battle of Waterloo, like Eugène's conduct in 1814, may be said to have been the result of a misunderstanding. Although he heard the cannonade in the distance, and although he was anxiously awaited by the Emperor on that day when the fate of France was decided, he was unable to join the army because he had received no *official* orders to do so.

[2] *Jellachich*, Franz, baron von (1746–1810): fought against Turkey and France in 1800 and was made field-marshal. In 1805 he was given command of the troops in the Tyrol, but on November 14th he was obliged to surrender to General Mathieu. He was *général de division* at Wagram and made the campaign in Steiermark in 1809.

On the morrow the glorious day for which Eugène at one time had scarcely dared hope dawned, for on May 27th the *armée d'Italie* came in sight of the *armée d'Allemagne.* Great was the excitement which reigned between the soldiers of the Emperor and those of the viceroy. The Emperor immediately sent a message of thanks to Eugène's troops and at the same time ordered their commander-in-chief to join him at Ebersdorf, near Vienna, where Eugène arrived two days later. The meeting between Napoleon and his adopted son was a touching one; the Emperor pressed Eugène to his heart and cried, with tears in his eyes, to the group of brilliant generals who assisted at this interview:

"It was not Eugène's courage alone, but his affectionate disposition which brought him here," meaning thereby that love for, and gratitude towards his step-father rather than personal ambition had strengthened his arm and enabled him to reach Vienna. At last the Emperor was satisfied with his conduct.

Forgetting all his past troubles, Eugène, with a light heart, wrote off a few lines to his wife telling her that "the Emperor had been extremely kind and amiable" to him, and that he had repeated several times that he was satisfied with him and with the *armée d'Italie.*

Napoleon considered that he could not reward Eugène better than by sending him into Hungary, there to complete his victory over the archduke Johann. In one of his letters, written just before meeting the Emperor, Eugène tells his wife that "he hopes that he and his men will be able to take a little rest and give themselves a good cleaning, which," he assures her, "they all require." But he was not allowed to waste much time in Vienna, neither was he able to take the rest he required, for on June 4th he went to the Emperor's head-quarters at Wiener Neustadt and received instructions as to how he was to accomplish the complete submission of the archduke Johann. The prospect of finding himself in a land where he did not understand the language caused him some dismay, for he had already found German too much for him, as he tells Augusta: "It is useless for me to rack my brain over the German language, I can scarcely remember three or four sentences at a time. And now I am about to find myself surrounded by proud, haughty Hungarians whose language I cannot speak. However, I shall be content with my mother-tongue and with Italian: those two languages are quite enough for me."

The letter ends with the following characteristic sentence: "When I feel tired, I console myself with the thought that the Emperor is pleased with me and that I am not forgotten in Milan. Your faithful husband, Eugène."

Eugène hoped to fall upon the archduke Johann before the commander-in-chief of the Austrian troops could cross the Danube. On June 11th, 12th and 13th Eugène won several small battles, but on the 14th, the anniversary of the Battle of Marengo, Eugène was happy enough to rout the archduke completely. When announcing the news to his step-father, Eugène wrote: "It was the anniversary of too glorious a day for us not to get the best of the encounter." Eugène said himself it was one of the warmest engagements he had ever witnessed. Six times were his troops repulsed while endeavouring to carry the enemy's position; but there is luck in odd numbers, and the seventh effort was crowned with success. The enemy were twice as numerous as Eugène's troops, which accounts for the fact that Eugène did not win the battle without sustaining considerable losses. Generals Anthouard, Delacroix and Debrême were all badly wounded, and Eugène's mameluke, Pétrus, while standing behind his master, was shot in the head. On hearing of this battle—called the *Battle of Raab*, from the town near which it was fought—Napoleon, who was then at Schönbrunn, exclaimed:

"Well done, Eugène, that's the way to become a king!"

And so highly did the Emperor think of this victory that when speaking of the Battle of Raab in after years he frequently termed it "the granddaughter of the Battle of Marengo." But the townsfolk of Raab were determined not to yield to the viceroy; they shut themselves up in their town and prepared to endure the horrors of a siege. After being bombarded for two whole days, which operation reduced half the town to ashes, the inhabitants consented to allow the victor to enter. Eugène speaks in his memoirs of seeing whole streets of houses reduced to heaps of ruins.

The scenes witnessed by the viceroy during this campaign made a very vivid and painful impression upon his mind. Again and again he tells Augusta how he longs to be home again, surrounded by his little family, the two curly-haired *choux* who, we may be sure, longed for his return as much as he himself did. The Emperor displayed a fatherly interest in Augusta. Having sent Eugène to finish his task in Hungary, Napoleon did not forget the lonely young wife in far-away Milan, a stranger in a strange land, and he writes to reassure her concerning her husband's safety :

"SCHÖNBRUNN, *June 15th*, 1809.

"My Daughter—I have received your letter of June 2nd ; I thank you for what you say in it. I have been informed of your splendid behaviour during the troubles in Italy and of the courage you displayed during certain events. I am delighted that you have afforded me another occasion on which to appreciate your character. Eugène is in Hungary, where he is beating the enemy.

"P.S.—I have just this minute received news that Eugène, on the 14th inst., the anniversary of the Battle of Marengo, won a battle at Raab, in Hungary, over the archduke Johann and the Prince Palatine ; he took 3000 prisoners, several cannon, and 4 flags."

Four days later the Emperor, although overwhelmed with business of all sorts, finds time to send another kind letter to his "daughter" :

"SCHÖNBRUNN, *June 19th*.

"My Daughter—Caffarelli will have given you news of Eugène and of the battle of Raab. I heard from him yesterday ; he was then outside Komorn.[1] The armies of the archduke Johann and the Prince Palatine, after their defeat, crossed the Danube at Komorn. The alarm has spread to Buda, and the Empress[2] has already left that town. You must not be anxious if you do not hear from your husband for some days."

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[1] Here is a pretty anecdote concerning Komorn, whose townsfolk have always enjoyed a reputation for being particularly valiant. There is a saying that when summoned to capitulate, the usual answer from the battlements was, "*Komme morgen*" (Kom-morn), a play upon the name of their beloved town. A stone figure of a woman is still to be seen at a corner of one of the old streets bearing the inscription, "Kom-morn !" (Come to-morrow !)

[2] Maria Ludovica Beatrix, princess of Modena, married the emperor Francis I of Austria in 1808, and died without issue, April 17th, 1816.

Two days later comes yet another letter in which "the Monster of Nature," as he was called by at least one of his neighbours, again assures her that she has no need to be alarmed, that Eugène is in good health, etc. etc.

We will now reproduce a couple of pages from the *Mémoires des guerres de Napoléon*, by Désiré Chlapowski, who, as one of Napoleon's generals, was in a position to judge of the merits or demerits of the viceroy:

". . . Prince Eugène marched towards Oldenburg and Steinamanger,[1] and thus pursued the archduke Johann far into Hungary.

"The archduke, having rejoined the Hungarian army, chose a very advantageous position at Sabadegy, three hours distant from Raab. Prince Eugène attacked him at once and forced him to abandon this position after defending it for some hours. That same evening the *armée d'Italie* advanced as far as Raab, which town is surrounded by very old walls.

"The archduke Johann had left a garrison of 3000 men in this town in order to divert the Prince's attention, while he himself retreated three leagues away and crossed the Danube at Komorn.

"Before the battle of Raab, the Emperor sent me to Marshal Davout,[2] who had not reached Presburg at that time, in order to inform him that Prince Eugène was in Hungary and marching towards Raab, and to advise him to join that Prince; having done this, I was to return to Vienna by the shortest route and tell the Emperor what I had seen.

"I took a little post-chaise and reached the spot where Davout was; he gave me a horse, which I mounted and rode after his cavalry, which had already crossed the borders of Hungary and were now on the road to Heimburg[3] and Raab. I took with me fifteen of the best-mounted hussars, and I left Kitsee on my right, supposing that I should still find Eugène in the neighbourhood of Papa, as the Emperor himself thought when he showed me on the map the route I was to follow from Kitsee to Papa. . . .

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[1] The Hungarian name of this town is Szombathely.

[2] *Davout*, prince d'Eckmühl, marshal of France (1770–1823): distinguished himself at Ulm, Austerlitz and Eckmühl.

[3] Probably Hainburg.

"I reached Raab at ten o'clock, just as Prince Eugène was about to enter the town, which had surrendered after having been bombarded for two days.

"The Prince only stayed there a short time and then started for a castle in the neighbourhood which had been prepared to receive him, and where the Italian guards, two battalions of grenadiers and two battalions of light infantry, with one hundred Lombardy horse-guards, had already arrived.

"While we were breakfasting I learnt from Prince Eugène and from General Macdonald (with more details from General Gifflenga, the Prince's staff-officer) all the incidents connected with the battle of Raab; I took copious notes in order to report the matter to the Emperor."

Eugène's cup of happiness was full when he received one of those letters of praise from his step-father which were perhaps all the more precious because they were so rare; he considered himself more than rewarded on receiving orders to withdraw his troops from Raab, send all his sick men and lame horses to Schönbrunn and join the Grand Army; the junction of the two armies was effected on July 5th. The morrow saw the beginning of that great Battle of Wagram, which lasted for forty-eight hours, the honour of winning which battle Napoleon wrote on his copy of the mysterious "Manuscrit venu de Sainte Hélène d'une manière inconnue" belonged not to Macdonald, but to Eugène.

I will leave to other and abler pens the task of painting the fighting and winning of the Battle of Wagram, that gigantic struggle between two great nations; it suffices to say that Eugène must have had a large share in that victory, for when, in obedience to his step-father's commands, he attacked the Austrians on the eve of that famous battle, he did so with complete success. It was upon this occasion that Eugène was fated to suffer for his blind faith in the Emperor's talents, for, having received orders from his step-father to attack an isolated portion of the Austrian army, he was warned by Macdonald that if he obeyed he would be worsted, and advised to tell the Emperor that an attack at such a moment would cost much and gain nothing. But Eugène lacked the necessary pluck to tell the Emperor that he was mistaken in his judgment. "I can't do it," said he; "he sent me orders to attack, so let us attack!"

Alas! Macdonald had guessed aright, for Eugène lost several valuable soldiers through this useless encounter. The memory of this little check was blotted out when, some hours later, the archduke Johann, while retreating, suddenly turned unexpectedly and endeavoured to stem the flood of glittering steel and streaming manes which was pursuing him, whereupon Eugène, although beaten back for a moment, gathered up his men with a cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and fell upon the archduke's troops with such determination that they were driven far away from the scene of their defeat.

In the bright sunshine of the morning after that great battle the Emperor, at eight o'clock, passed between the bivouacs of the *armée d'Italie* and said to the weary troops taking a few hours of well-earned rest:

"You are brave fellows! You have covered yourselves with glory!" Was it not worth while to serve such a master?

Eugène's men deserved this praise, for during the battle no less than 150,000 bullets were fired by the two armies, and of these bullets 30,000 were directed against his own particular corps. Generals Pons and Valvassone were very seriously wounded, and several officers had their horses killed under them.

At the Emperor's desire Eugène, together with a portion of the *armée d'Italie* and the Saxon and Würtemberg troops, remained for a few days in the vicinity of Vienna in order to protect that city from any attempts of the Austrian generals, Chasteler and Gyulay,[1] to recover lost ground. However, the Austrian and Hungarian troops were completely demoralized.

On July 10th Eugène won a small victory over the Hungarians, when he captured a bridge over the March.

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[1] *Gyulay*, Ignaz, count (1763–1831): fought successfully against the Turks; to him is imputed the fault of having allowed Napoleon to escape after the disastrous battle of Leipsic. Gyulay was *ban* of Croatia, Dalmatia and Esclavonia.

Four days later the armistice signed by the two Emperors at Znaym assured peace, for a month at least, to both armies, which, after so many long weeks of constant marching and endless engagements, were thankful to rest. Eugène, who was fighting away on the banks of the March, did not learn of the armistice until thirty-six hours after the treaty had been signed; so that, as he himself told Augusta, he had the pleasure of receiving the enemy's last bullets.

Eugène now transferred his head-quarters to Presburg, which town, like Raab, had had much to endure from the French invaders, many lives and over two hundred houses having been destroyed by fire and shot.

While at Presburg, Eugène went to visit the battle-field of Austerlitz, from whence he proceeded to Vienna, where Metternich[1] and the comte de Champagny[2] were trying to negotiate a durable peace and where he, in obedience to his step-father's orders, remained until the close of the armistice.

Vienna at that time was the meeting-place of many people of note. Eugène's letters to his wife are full of interesting details. We cannot refrain from reproducing some of these letters; not only do they bring the past before our eyes, but they show Eugène in his true colours as no word-picture of ours could do:

"VIENNA, *July 22nd*, 1809.

"I have just returned from my expedition, my dear Augusta, and I hasten to send you my news, which is good. I have come to spend a few days in Vienna in order to see the Emperor. I saw Louis [his wife's brother] this morning; he has much improved since we last met. We breakfasted with the Emperor; I hope that we shall see a good deal of each other during my short stay here. You can guess of whom we talked. We spoke constantly of you, as I think constantly of you. I was delighted to hear that Eugénie had cut two teeth ; let us hope that she will cut all her teeth with equal facility. Allemagne[1] met me at Brunn and gave me my letters which had been delayed at Udine ; there were fourteen from you ! The pleasure which I experienced on receiving the good news of my little family amply compensated me for all I had suffered while waiting for it to arrive. Adieu, my very dear Augusta, I hope that we shall not be parted much longer. I send you a thousand kisses to share between yourself and our little darlings ; write and tell me who got the largest share. I love you with all my heart. I remain your faithful husband and friend."

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[1] *Metternich*, Clement Wenceslas Nepomuk, prince of (1773–1859): celebrated Austrian diplomatist, to whom were entrusted several important negotiations, including the marriage between Napoleon and Marie-Louise, the secret treaties concluded between Russia and Austria, and Austria and England with a view to clipping Napoleon's pinions. His marked conservative opinions made him very unpopular with many of his compatriots, and led to his leaving Austria and spending three or four years in England. On his return to his native land he lived in retirement.

[2] *Champagny*, Jean-Baptiste Nompère de (1756–1834), duc de Cadore. He began life in the French navy, was elected deputy in 1789. Napoleon appointed him as ambassador to Vienna in 1801; in 1804 he was made Minister of the Interior; and eight years later he, as Foreign Minister, opened negotiations for the hand of Marie-Louise. Napoleon gave him the title of duc de Cadore in 1808. He continued to serve the masters of France during the Restoration, and was made *pair de France* in 1819.

" VIENNA, *July 26th*, 1809.

" I am sending Bataille[2] to you with this letter, my good and beloved Augusta. Your birthday will soon come, and I hope that you will get my letter on the day itself. I am sending you a little present from Vienna which I thought pretty ; I hope you will admire it. I will not repeat for August 3rd my assurances of love and devotion : these sentiments are still mine and will never leave me. I send some toys for our little angels. I hope that Josephine will make her usual little birthday-speech ; how sorry I am not to be at home to teach it to her ! I trust that the news of the armistice will have quieted matters in the Italian kingdom ; I was much pained to hear of those riots. We are preparing to go to war again ; however, we have every reason to believe that matters will be arranged before long. I do not know when I shall see you again, nor when I shall be able to press you to my heart ; but you know, I trust, that whenever that happy day comes, it will bring me great joy."

" VIENNA, *July 28th*, 1809.

" . . . The armistice is completely clearing this country. . . I dined to-day with Duroc and Bessières ; our little trio had not been able to dine together for five years. After dinner we thought we should like to take a stroll on the ramparts; but hardly had we appeared in our evening dress-coats when we were recognized and followed by a huge crowd. I had already walked there alone three or four days before and nobody had recognized me. But now the soldiers saluted us and gave our secret away. We revenged ourselves by going to hear the opera *Il matrimonio secreto;* the music was beautiful, as it always is, but it was badly sung. . . . I reopen my letter in order to reply to your question concerning the Emperor's birthday. A *Te Deum* must be sung in the royal chapel, and there must be a concert in the evening, together with a grand reception."

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[1] Eugène's aide-de-camp.

[2] Another of Eugène's aides-de-camp.

"VIENNA, *August 2nd*, 1809.

"My good and beloved Augusta . . . I passed yesterday at Schönbrunn. A German tragedy was performed there; we were prodigiously bored by it. Luckily the entertainment concluded with a pretty little ballet. I am going to Schönbrunn again to-night, when one of Weigl's[1] Italian operas is going to be performed. The Emperor is very kind to me as always; he has given me an immense number of decorations for my troops. They say that the Plenipotentiaries are to meet either to-morrow or the day after; that is all we know. . . ."

In his next letter, dated August 3rd, Eugène tells his wife that he has again been to Schönbrunn, where he slept the night and hunted on the morrow with the Prince de Neufchâtel, returning to the palace in time to go on parade and breakfast with the Emperor. He also alludes to Augusta's health; she had lately hurt her foot, and the forced inaction had brought on an attack of nervous depression; to comfort her, this good husband exhorts her to "trust to *our star*, a lucky star indeed, to our conscience which nothing shall ever sully, to the Emperor's sense of justice, and to the bonds of affection which unite us."

Napoleon's birthday was kept as loyally in Vienna as if he had been in his own capital. A *Te Deum* was sung in the presence of the Emperor and all his generals, after which the Grand Army paraded with eagles waving and flags flying, which sight was witnessed by hundreds of spectators.

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[1] *Weigl*, Joseph (1766–1843): a Hungarian composer who wrote many operas for the Scala at Milan, besides numerous cantatas and oratorios.

After a grand banquet, to which Eugène was, of course, invited, the Emperor drove in an open carriage through his camp where his brave servitors were at mess ; he received an enthusiastic ovation. This day, perhaps one of Napoleon's happiest birthdays, ended with a display of illuminations and fireworks, during which Napoleon, clad in evening dress, strolled about the city arm-in-arm with Eugène, but was recognized by very few people.

"Vienna is full of rumours of a peace," Eugène writes to his wife. "I have nothing new to tell you ; the townsfolk say that the talk is of nothing but war at the Emperor of Austria's head-quarters. But I fancy they only say that in order to prevent us being too hard upon them when we do consent to make peace. After all, we have got half their empire, and they can never hope to force us to abandon the position we now occupy."

We have seen mention in one of Eugène's letters of the fact that riots had again taken place in Milan. Augusta, as on a previous occasion, had been able to restore order ; however, she found it a more difficult matter to obtain obedience from some of her Italian ladies-in-waiting. Mmes. Kercolani and Colini, for instance, in order to be spared serving the excellent vice-reine, frequently excused themselves on the plea of bad health ; however, when they came, expecting to be paid as much as the other ladies who had continued to fulfil their duties, they found that Eugène had decided otherwise and that he was acting with the Emperor's approval.

In a letter written about this time Eugène urges his wife to go to Monza and to invite some of her ladies to pay her short visits of four or five days' duration ; for, says he, "they will cheer you up and you will become better acquainted with one another : it is necessary to know those with whom we live."

As the month of September passed away, the chances of a peace being signed increased. Although the two Emperors corresponded frequently, Napoleon still considered it advisable to act as if preparing to go to war again. The partisans of both declared that their rulers desired to make peace and expressed their opinion that certain difficulties would soon be smoothed away. And, indeed, Austria was not in a condition to fight yet awhile. The brave Tyrolese under Andreas Hofer, the national martyr, were said to be without food, arms or ammunition; and, what was more, the greatest anarchy was reported to reign among the little band of patriots. Winter promised to be early that year; it was already very cold, and Napoleon hoped that the first fall of snow would drive them from their mountain fastnesses and oblige them to seek shelter in the valleys below.

Towards the end of September, Napoleon held several reviews, when Eugène's army, which the Emperor had lately increased by four cavalry regiments—thus giving the viceroy 9000 cavalry troops—came in for a large share of praise. These reviews lasted several hours; Eugène terms them "games of miniature warfare." But just as everybody was congratulating his neighbour that peace was about to be concluded came the news that the negotiations between France and Austria had received a check. Eugène writes:

"VIENNA, *October 6th*, 1809.

". . . Everything was going on splendidly; some detachments of the royal guard had already set off on the road to Munich; but I fancy the Austrian Plenipotentiaries have been again guilty of underhand dealing, for these troops have suddenly been recalled. However, another interview has taken place, and it is said that the peace may be signed the day after to-morrow. So in forty-eight hours I shall be able to tell you something definite and, perhaps, think of starting for home. I need not tell you that I think often of you, for you are never out of my mind. I have made some purchases during the last few days. . . ."

So much depended upon the peace being signed; many a mother in France, Italy, Austria and Hungary trembled lest her son, having escaped death hitherto, should perish in a new and more horrible war; many a toil-worn peasant dreaded to see that ominous cloud of dust appear on the horizon, draw nearer and, as it passed, swallow up all that was worth taking, leaving starvation and desolation in its wake; many a footsore soldier shuddered lest he should hear the call to war again, not because courage was lacking, but because the smell of gunpowder and carnage and the sight of suffering and death wear out the nerves, if not the courage.

Eugène felt the suspense of those days of uncertainty very keenly; was not everything which makes life worth living—a charming wife, two little children, some true friends, many professedly faithful subjects—calling to him from the blue distance?

But he had not much time to worry about what the future would bring him; the present provided sufficient difficulties to occupy his mind, for we find from a letter written by him to the Prince de Neufchâtel (Berthier) that some "English brigands" had made a descent upon the coast of Istria and steps had to be taken to stop their advance.

"VIENNA, *October 10th*, 1809.

"I hasten to inform Your Highness that I have lately received news that the English have landed fifty brigands on the coast of Istria and that fresh troubles have broken out in that department. I immediately wrote to General Baraguey d'Hilliers ordering him to send a marching column of 5000 or 6000 men under the command of an intelligent officer. The garrison of Triest, comprising the 3rd battalion of the 22nd light horse and the 3rd and 4th battalions of the 79th regiment of troops of the line, can furnish these troops. I beg Your Highness kindly to inform His Majesty of this step and to receive, etc. etc.

"EUGÈNE."

At last, on October 14th, 1809, the long-expected peace, called the Peace of Znaym, was signed. The Emperor immediately returned to Paris. But Eugène was not to see his beloved Augusta for another four weeks; before starting for home he had to complete his task by pacifying the Tyrol, which had been the scene of constant battles for several months.

CHAPTER IX

Eugène tries persuasion in the Tyrol—He issues a proclamation to the Tyrolese and thereby offends his father-in-law—He wishes to obtain an interview with Andreas Hofer—Return to Milan—Napoleon accords a strange reception to Eugène's cousin—Eugène is requested to come to Paris—The blow falls—A painful family meeting—The Bonapartes triumph over the de Beauharnais—The ex-Empress retires to La Malmaison—Eugène's opinion is asked—He returns home—The vice-regal couple assist at the Emperor's second marriage.

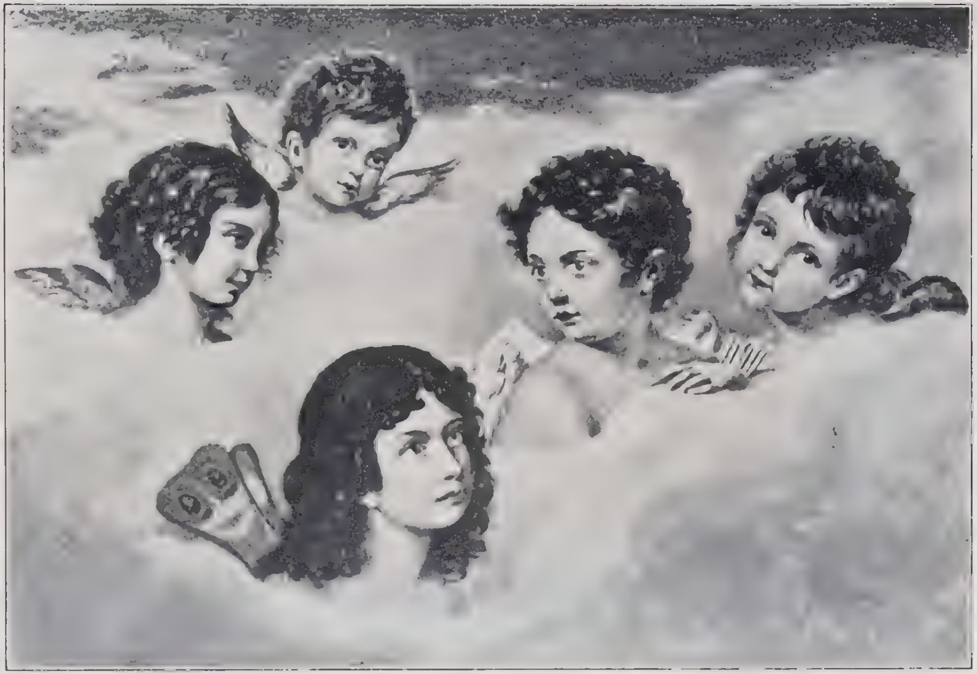
THE news that the peace had been signed must have been very welcome to the vice-reine ; did it not mean that her husband would soon be free to return home to his " dearest Augusta and the two little angels " ?

At the Emperor's wish, Eugène stayed in Vienna until the treaty was ratified, which done, he was to repair to the Tyrol, there to re-establish order either by force or persuasion. On receiving news that the peace was really about to be signed, Eugène sent word to his Ministers in Milan ordering *Te Deums* to be sung in all the churches throughout the kingdom of Italy, and Augusta was begged to have one sung in her own private chapel.

The Emperor took an affectionate farewell of his step-son on leaving Vienna, promising to invite him and his wife to Paris during the coming winter. He also did something else before leaving the conquered town, something very characteristic : he blew up the fortifications of Vienna—" it was a magnificent sight ! " writes Eugène.

It was Eugène's intention to persuade, not to force, the Tyrolese to submit to the Emperor of France ; but this the Tyrolese were determined not to do. Backed by Austria, who had given them to understand that she would soon be in a position again to take up arms against her master, encouraged by the clergy, always a powerful factor in Austria and Bavaria, the Tyrolese, under Andreas Hofer, the courageous innkeeper-patriot, resisted Eugène's army, notwithstanding the fact that winter was coming and that Eugène was seconded by the very capable General Baraguey d'Hilliers.

From Villach, Eugène, with Napoleon's permission, issued a proclamation to the Tyrolese in which he urged them to



THE CHILDREN OF EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS

From the picture at Arenenberg. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Co.

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lay down their arms and submit to the inevitable. He was influenced to do this by his belief that the Tyrolese would submit as soon as the news of the Peace of Znaym had penetrated into their green valleys.

Andreas Hofer must have heard of Eugène's reputation for clemency, for, encouraged by this proclamation, he wrote to the viceroy begging for mercy and, at the same time, recommended his compatriots to submit to Napoleon's will. Eugène's proclamation, and still more the letter which it had called forth, gave great offence to the King of Bavaria, who immediately wrote off to his son-in-law :

" My dear Son—I have just heard of the letter which the chief of the insurgents wrote to you, in which he asked that my troops might be recalled from the Tyrol and that he might be allowed to go to Inspruck (*sic*) without running the risk of being molested by my officers. You ought to realize, my dear son, that if you grant this request, my authority will be compromised. I will not conceal from you the fact that the fault lies with your proclamation, in which you declared that you would appoint a commission to examine their petition ; that is not the way to address rebellious subjects, and they will begin again at the very first opportunity.

" I have too much faith in your affection and in your feelings of honour not to be convinced that you will not allow the authority or the rights which every sovereign possesses over his subjects to be compromised. The Tyrolese are an infamous nation, capable of committing the most horrible crimes : witness the treason of which they were guilty only four days ago against General Drouet ; [1] he has probably told you all about the matter. Once again, my dearest child, I trust to your affection and to your feelings of justice."

Eugène was surprised and angered at the unexpected effect produced upon his father-in-law by his proclamation, which was couched in the language of common sense and humanity. How differently the King of Bavaria and the viceroy of Italy looked at matters is shown in a letter written by Eugène to his wife :

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[1] *Drouet d'Erlon,* Jean Baptiste, comte (1765–1844), fought during the wars of the Republic and the Empire, when Napoleon made him a marshal. He joined his master during the *Cent-Jours*, fought at Waterloo, and was condemned to death by default in 1816, when he took refuge in Prussia. He returned to France in 1825 and was made Governor of Algeria.

"I do not consider that a sovereign's dignity is offended by hearing and receiving the complaints and petitions of his subjects, when those subjects, as I have already stated, have laid down their arms and have ceased fighting." And then he concludes with this bitter remark :

"I curse this mission a thousand times. If we succeed, we shall do so at the cost of our honour ; if we lose, shame will be our guerdon."

Eugène's proclamation, however, had other and happier results ; for, as his troops penetrated farther into the fair land of Tyrol, many of the insurgents returned to their homes and laid down their arms. Nevertheless, Andreas Hofer was not always obeyed by his followers, for the viceroy's soldiers were sometimes attacked in lonely places and severely worsted. But Eugène wisely ordered his men not to retaliate, saying, in excuse of the assailants, that they were probably drunk and did not know what they were about. He knew that the greater portion of the inhabitants of the Tyrol had sworn to shed the last drop of their blood rather than bow to Napoleon's will, and he himself believed that this guerilla warfare would prove too much for his troops, accustomed to fighting in wide, open spaces, under the broad dome of the heavens.

Eugène now sent his cousin and aide-de-camp Tascher to request Andreas Hofer to have an interview, in order that they might arrange matters amicably, and thus avoid more bloodshed.

But Hofer had changed his intentions meanwhile ; the clergy had persuaded him to continue his resistance, and so the interview between these two men who were made to understand one another never came off.

The Emperor, furious at the failure of his attempt to be conciliating, sent commands to Eugène to issue a second proclamation, in which he gave notice that all Tyrolese found with fire-arms in their possession would be shot. In future there was war to the knife between the Tyrolese and the viceroy's troops. Andreas Hofer must have regretted having listened to Austria when she, probably dreading another visit from Napoleon, suddenly withdrew her support and left poor Hofer to take care of himself and his compatriots.

On January 27th, 1810, this brave son of the soil was taken captive in the Passierthal; he was first sent to Trent and then to Mantua, where, after a mock trial, he was shot, notwithstanding all Eugène's efforts to persuade his step-father to spare his prisoner's life.

But we must go back to Eugène, who at last received permission from the Emperor to return to the home from which he had now been absent nearly eight months. He started from Villach November 12th, and reached Milan two days later. With what joy the young couple met again after this long absence! And now the town of Milan woke up from its long sleep with the return of the Prince Charming. Balls, concerts, receptions of all sorts were given by everybody who could afford to do so. *Te Deums* were sung in all the churches in the capital. Eugène, in his gratitude to the brave victims of the Austrian campaign, endowed sixty young girls, daughters or sisters of those who had left Italy never to return.

But his happiness was of short duration.

From the East, the storehouse of Wisdom, come the following lines:

. . . "Be ever fearful of trouble when all seems fair and clear,
For the easy is soon made grievous by the swift transforming sphere.
Forth will it drive remorseless when it deemeth the time at hand
The king from his court and castle, the lord from his house and land.
Seek for the mean in all things, nor strive to fulfil your gain,
For the Moon when the full it reacheth is already about to wane."[1]

Eugène's cousin Tascher having expressed a wish to visit his family in France, the viceroy granted his request, at the same time charging him to give the Emperor full particulars concerning the state of affairs in the Tyrol.

On reaching Paris, young Tascher had a very strange interview with the Emperor, to whom he paid his first visit. He concluded that somebody had been trying to prejudice the Emperor against the viceroy, when Napoleon, instead of receiving him kindly and asking after the health of his "son and daughter," blurted out this cruel question:

"Has Eugène sent you to spy upon me?"

Before the astonished aide-de-camp could find a suitable reply the Emperor added:

"Have you seen your cousin?"

Tascher, like many of his contemporaries, never felt quite at his ease when conversing with the Emperor, not even when that Emperor happened to be in a contented frame of mind, which was not often. But when, as on this occasion, that pale, handsome face—which was already beginning to lose the look of keen intelligence which we note in his earlier portraits—that look which, as he himself said, " electrified his fellow-creatures "—bore an expression of distrust and great displeasure, Tascher must have wished himself anywhere but in the Emperor's study. However, he was able to murmur a few words to the effect that he had only just reached Paris, that his travelling-carriage was still in the courtyard of the Tuileries. After questioning him for some minutes, Napoleon showed his wife's cousin a door leading to a secret staircase, and said :

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[1] Násir-i-Khusraw's Diwán.

" Go and see your cousin."

Tascher found Josephine in tears ; she flung herself into his arms, crying and sobbing :

" He wants to get rid of me ; he wants to divorce me. Where is Eugène ? When does he arrive ? "

Tascher assured his cousin that this was the first he had heard about a divorce, and said that he was quite sure that Eugène knew nothing about the matter.

But the viceroy was soon to hear all about it. On November 26th, only a fortnight after his return home, he received the following letter from the man who had once found pleasure in calling him and treating him as his son :

" My Son—If nothing prevents you, I should like you to start from Milan so as to reach Paris December 5th or 6th. Come alone. Travel with three carriages and four or five attendants. Come through Fontainebleau—that is to say, if nothing prevents you leaving home."

Hortense, whose love for her brother made her anxious to break the terrible blow to him, hastened to Fontainebleau in order to see him before he reached Paris, and warn him that the long-dreaded event, which had already caused both him and his mother so much bitterness in anticipation, was now to cease to be a threat and to become a punishment.

So Eugène started from Milan. From a short letter, written December 3rd, 1809, from the hospice on the Mont Cenis, in which he tells the vice-reine that the weather is shocking, and that the Queen of Naples had been obliged to wait three days before attempting the pass, we find that he had no idea when he left Milan why the Emperor required his presence in Paris. But his first letter from the capital tells the happy wife at home the terrible news :

"PARIS, *December 7th*, 1809.

"I arrived here this morning, my dearest Augusta. My sister came as far as Fontainebleau in order to meet me. . . . I was very glad to see my good sister again. I could not tell you the reason of my journey before my departure, my kind friend, because I did not know it. . . ."

He then tells her everything—perhaps her loving heart had already guessed a great deal ; he ends thus :

"It is indispensable for the Emperor's peace of mind that everything should be arranged in a seemly manner. You know me well enough to realize my feelings about the matter. The only thing which enables me to bear what I am now going through is the knowledge that I possess your affection, and that your love for me is, like yourself, absolutely trustworthy. . . . Adieu, my good friend ; I love you, and shall love you all my life, as well as our two dear children. I shall be back in Milan much sooner than I at first expected."

As Eugène's own residence in Paris had been given by the Emperor to one of his brothers, the viceroy took up his abode in Joseph Bonaparte's *hôtel* in the rue Marbœuf. His first visit was for his mother. It must have been some consolation to Josephine to talk to her son and to weep out all her sorrow and remorse on the honest heart of that good Eugène who would so gladly have taken her burden of grief from her, and borne it on his own broad shoulders. On learning the news that her husband, by his mother's divorce, would in all probability be cast on one side and forgotten should the Emperor contract another union, and thus form newer and dearer ties, Augusta wrote a few words of loving consolation to the wounded viceroy ; this letter was supplemented on the morrow by another and a longer missive :

"MILAN, *December 13th*, 1809.

"I know not what I said to you in my letter yesterday, my tenderly beloved husband. I was quite crushed by the news of the divorce ; my grief was all the more poignant because it was for you that I grieved. I can quite realize the painful position in which you are now placed. Although so far away, I can see the expression of joy on the faces of those who are doing us this grievous harm. But they are powerless to harm us as they would like to do, for they cannot rob you of your spotless reputation and your blameless conscience. You do not deserve these misfortunes; I say *these*, because I expect others await us. I am ready for everything, but I shall regret nothing if I still keep your affection; on the contrary, I shall be happy to prove to you that I love you for yourself alone. Our names may be erased from the list of great personages, but they will be inscribed on the title-rôle of happy mortals. And is it not better so? I do not write to your poor mother. What could I say to her? Assure her of my respect and affection. You tell me that you will soon be back; these words have eased my grief. I am longing to see you again. Do not imagine that I shall allow myself to be down-hearted. No, my Eugène, my courage is equal to yours, and I wish to prove to you that I am worthy to be your wife. Adieu, dear friend; continue to love me, and trust in the love with which I have sworn to cherish you until the last moment of my life. "AUGUSTA."

Eugène having, with some difficulty, persuaded his mother to see that she must give in to the inevitable, now proposed that she should have an interview with the Emperor in the presence of himself and Hortense.

Napoleon had already talked the matter over with Hortense, when he had tried to get her to influence her mother to ask for a divorce. But she had refused to do so, whereupon Napoleon had dismissed her with these words:

"Very well, then; I will see Eugène when all the persons whom I am now expecting have arrived."

Those persons were Kings Jérôme, Murat and Louis, Princess Pauline and the Queen of Naples, a fit audience to witness the end of the de Beauharnais' reign. The interview between Napoleon, Josephine, Hortense and Eugène now took place.

Napoleon's face betrayed what he was suffering on greeting his step-son; he could only nod his head and take Eugène's hand when the latter asked him if it was true that he had made up his mind to divorce the Empress. On hearing his reply, Eugène said:

"Sire, allow me to bid you farewell."

"What do you mean?" asked the Emperor.

"Oh! Sire, the son of her who is no longer Empress cannot retain his position as viceroy. I will accompany my mother to her retreat—I will console her."

"Do you want to leave me, then, Eugène? *You!* . . . ah! you do not know the reasons which force me to take this step. Supposing I have a son, the child for which I have so often longed, the son who is so necessary to me, who will take my place by his side when I am absent? Who would be a father to him if I died? Who would make a man of him?"

The Emperor's eyes filled with tears. Did some mysterious warning come to him at that moment when he was about to realize his most ambitious projects, that his child would need a father's care some day and find it not?

Napoleon pressed Eugène to his heart. . . .

The King of Naples knew what he was talking about when he said that "royalties had no relations," thereby meaning that the deepest affections, the tenderest ties, must give way to the cold reality of a golden sceptre.

Napoleon then pointed out to the sad little trio standing before him that his divorce was a political necessity; he assured them that it grieved him deeply to be separated from the Empress whom he so deeply loved—perhaps he never realized *how* dearly until she was no more—who so thoroughly deserved his affection, he added generously. "But," said he in conclusion, "my position forces me to sacrifice my affections to the interests of my people." He then assured them that any union he might contract in the future would be powerless to make him forget his affection for them, and that he should always take an interest in their future. Vain promises!

Josephine, struggling to repress her tears, cried:

"Ah! when once we are separated, my children will soon be forgotten!" And then she clumsily spoilt the whole effect by adding:

"Make Eugène King of Italy! By so doing you will satisfy my ambition as his mother; and, what is more, your conduct, I dare to believe, will be approved by all the foreign powers."

But Eugène now broke in with:

"No! no! I will not have my name mixed up in this painful affair!"

Then turning to his mother, he added:

"Your son would have nothing to do with a crown which had been purchased at the cost of a divorce."

Taking Hortense's hand in his, he said to his step-father:

"Our mother must go, and we must go with her; and then we three will do penance in some secluded spot for having known an ephemeral grandeur by which our lives have been saddened rather than gladdened."

At these words Napoleon could not restrain his tears.

On Josephine still urging him to make her son King of Italy, Eugène tried to cut short this painful interview by remarking to her:

"If you accede to the Emperor's request, he ought to consider you and you alone."

Napoleon again did justice to Eugène's noble qualities, for he replied:

"Eugène speaks like the good-hearted fellow he is; he does well to trust to my affection."

On December 15th, 1809, at seven o'clock at night, two gentlemen entered the throne-room of the palace of the Tuileries; of these two gentlemen, one, the prime arch-chancellor, Cambacérès by name, seemed in remarkably good spirits; while the face of the other, the comte Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély,[1] bore an expression of sadness. A few minutes later the folding doors of the Emperor's sanctum were thrown open and the visitors were ushered into the presence of a little group of kings, queens and princes, all of whom had been invited to witness the downfall of the de Beauharnais dynasty. They made a brave show: there were the King and Queen of Naples, the King and Queen of Westphalia, the Queens of Spain and Holland, Princess Pauline, *Madame Mère*, the viceroy of Italy, and the two principal actors in the political tragedy.

Napoleon betrayed little or no emotion while addressing his audience, and stated his reasons for wishing to divorce his wife in a voice which scarcely trembled.

Josephine, who was dressed all in white, and who looked even paler than usual, seemed to have resigned herself to her fate; indeed she was much less moved than her children, for

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[1] *Regnault*, Etienne (1736–1820): called *de Saint-Jean d'Angély*, espoused the cause of the Republic, seconded General Bonaparte on the 18th *Brumaire*, and was later made Secretary of State to the Imperial family. He remained faithful to the Emperor as long as he lived.

Hortense, who supported her mother, wept almost incessantly, while Eugène, who stood with his arms folded by the Emperor's side, was seized at the very beginning of the ordeal with a nervous fit of trembling which he vainly tried to master.

Encouraged by her children's presence, Josephine rose from her seat and uttered a speech in which she declared herself willing to be divorced since her husband's future depended upon him having an heir. During this speech, which was reproduced in the *Moniteur* on the morrow, Eugène turned deadly pale, and appeared on the point of fainting. The speeches read, the crowd of royal personages and courtiers began to advance towards a table upon which lay the official documents appertaining to the divorce, to which each in turn affixed his or her name and then passed into the throne-room. Josephine, still leaning on her daughter's arm, signed her name, and then left the scene of her downfall. With trembling hand Eugène took the pen and wrote his name ; hardly had he laid down the pen when he was seen to stagger ; he managed to reach the folding doors between the two rooms, but before he could pass through them he had fallen to the ground in a swoon. Not a hand was stretched out to help him ; not one of his mother's enemies expressed the slightest concern. And there was Jérôme *le petit*, Napoleon's favourite brother, who was enjoying his revenge for many a little humiliation received in his boyhood, when Eugène had been held up to him as a model of perfection ; there was Pauline with her handsome Italian features distorted by a sneer ; there was *Madame Mère*, whose awe for her successful son probably prevented her displaying any concern for poor Eugène, whom, nevertheless, she really liked. As nobody attempted to help him, he was eventually picked up by one of the gentlemen-ushers, and given into the charge of his aides-de-camp, who soon brought him round.

But the worst had still to come. Eugène, as arch-treasurer of the Senate, had to make his first appearance in the Senate on the morrow, December 16th. A cruel whim on the part of his step-father obliged Eugène, notwithstanding his prayers for mercy, to announce to the assembled senators, clad in their robes of state and presided over by Cambacérès, the news that the Emperor and the Empress had agreed to separate. But the composition of that speech was beyond him ; in his distress he turned to Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, who had always been friendly to him—some say M. Fontanes[1]—and between them they composed the following address, which he uttered after the archchancellor, Cambacérès, had opened the *séance:*

"My mother, I and my sister owe everything to the Emperor. He has acted the part of a father towards us; he shall always find us his devoted children. . . .

"It is necessary to the happiness of France that the founder of the fourth dynasty should be provided in his old age with an heir who will ensure peace and glory to us all and to our fatherland. . . .

"When my mother was crowned by the hands of her august husband in the presence of the nation, she pledged herself to sacrifice all her affections to the interests of France. She has often been touched on beholding the mental sufferings of a man accustomed to govern and to walk unflinching towards the goal of his ambition. The tears which this resolution has cost the Emperor shall be my mother's crown of glory. . . ."

More than one historian has marvelled at Eugène's docility in consenting to address the senators. We cannot say why he obeyed this cruel behest, but we can safely say that Napoleon could not have chosen a better messenger to announce to the nation that he and Josephine had agreed to separate. It is not surprising that Napoleon made this choice: whom else could he have chosen? Not Joseph, with his knack of getting himself into hot water and dragging others with him; not Murat, with his hot head and blunt speech; not Lucien, with his sharp tongue, for he, although he hated Josephine, might have compared his brother to Henry VIII of England, as he once compared him to Oliver Cromwell. We find no trace of blame for either his stepfather or his mother in Eugène's speech—and he knew the faults of both and suffered for them. He only remembers that he is *the son,* and that title is dearer and more sacred to him than any other. Having fulfilled his mission, he immediately withdrew. The effect produced by this speech was like that of a rainbow after a rainy day, so different was it from the cut-and-dried effusions of Napoleon's usual spokesmen—paid to be faithful to his cause.

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[1] *Fontanes,* Louis, marquis de (1757–1821): poet, professor of belles-lettres, president of the legislative body, statesman, senator, and, having voted for Napoleon's overthrow, *pair de France.*

The senators were so touched by Eugène's dignified bearing, that they rose in a body and proposed that a deputation should wait upon the viceroy with a message of sympathy with him in his grief. However, two or three prudent members having thought the matter over, and probably dreading the Emperor's anger, urged their fellow-senators to do nothing. Nevertheless, several of their number went to call upon Eugène at his *hôtel* and assure him of their esteem. That very day Augusta wrote to her poor Eugène :

"MILAN, *December* 16*th*, 1809.

"I have resigned myself to everything, and I bow to the Will of God. Your magnanimity will astonish many, but it cannot astonish your wife, who loves you, if possible, even more on account of it. I will prove to you, my dear Eugène, that my courage is equal to yours, although I must confess I never expected such events, and especially at such a time. Your little ones are in good health. God knows what the future holds for them! Adieu! O best of husbands; be assured that my dearest wish is to please you and to give you proofs of an affection which will only cease with the life of your faithful wife, "AUGUSTA."

Eugène, having returned to the *hôtel* Marbœuf, tries to calm himself by writing to his wife a description of the scene enacted on the previous evening :

"PARIS, *December* 16*th*, 1809.

"I could not write to you yesterday, my good Augusta, because I remained with the Empress until midnight. At last the much-discussed divorce of the Emperor and my mother has been accomplished. A family council took place at the Tuileries last night. The Emperor explained the reasons which obliged him to separate from his wife and which required this sacrifice ; the Empress's reply was noble, dignified and full of the most touching expressions. The archchancellor having drawn up his official statement, we all signed our names. After that a private council was held, when the project of the *senatus consultum* was read.

"This morning I went to the Senate, where, at the Emperor's wish, I explained the reasons of my family's conduct in this matter. Everything passed off very quietly, and the Empress was most brave and most resigned. All the different documents will be published in the newspapers either to-morrow or the day after, so you will be able to read them.

"The Emperor is going to Trianon and the Empress to La Malmaison, and I am starting immediately in order to join her. Adieu, my dearest Augusta. I love you and our two children more than words can express."

In the above letter we find no mention of what Eugène suffered during his ordeal, but we see that Josephine had already taken her first step on the road to exile. However, she did not go alone. No! Eugène was by her side, ready to support and console her. Poor things! they both pretended to be very brave, cheerful even, but neither was deceived. In vain did they endeavour, as they drove along that well-known road from Paris to La Malmaison down which the Emperor and the Empress had so often driven in order to spend a few days in that most delightful retreat, to talk as if nothing unusual had happened, as if the Empress had not passed through that door which separates the Past from the Present, and which, when once closed, our feeble hands can never open again. From La Malmaison Eugène wrote:

"*December 17th*, 1809.

"We arrived at La Malmaison last night, my dearest Augusta. We might have felt more cheerful had the weather been finer; but it rained the whole day. The Empress is well. She was very unhappy this morning on revisiting the place where she had lived so long with the Emperor, but courage soon got the upper hand, and she is now resigned to her new position. I really believe that she will be calmer and happier in her mind in the future. We had several visitors this morning; they say that all Paris is talking of our courage and of the Empress's resignation. Those who imagine that I regret any favour or advancement are much mistaken. I hope by my conduct under the circumstances to convince the most incredulous that I am above such things. I will not hide from you the fact that I was tormented by the fear lest this event should grieve you too much. However, I have so often been able to appreciate your sterling qualities that I love to think that you will be the first to tell me that I did right in acting as I did. You will have read all the documents concerning the matter in the *Moniteur* of this morning.

I hope that I shall soon be back in Milan, and then you will be able to tell me exactly what you think. . . ."

But although the Emperor and the Empress were to be only friends in future, they did not cease writing to each other, as we find from the following letter written by Josephine a few days after retiring to La Malmaison, in which she reverts to Napoleon's promise to provide for Eugène in a suitable manner:

"As for the need of an heir, though you may think me prejudiced in favour of my son, can I, ought I to keep silent concerning him who is the pride of my mother's heart, him in whom you once centred all your hopes? So the adoption of January 12th, 1806, was nothing but another political lie. Yet there is nothing doubtful about my Eugène's talents and virtues. How many times did you not load him with praise? What do I say? You thought to reward him by giving him a throne, and often did you say that he deserved far greater things! Ah! France has often repeated your words since those days; but what do you care for the wishes of France?"

Notwithstanding this and several other rather scolding letters, Eugène tells us that the Emperor came to see his ex-wife and that she returned his visits.

"La Malmaison, *December 26th*, 1809.

"My dear Augusta—The Emperor came to see the Empress the day before yesterday, and yesterday she went to visit him at Trianon, when he kept her to dinner. The Emperor was very good and kind to her, and she seemed more cheerful. I have every reason to think that the Empress will be much happier in her new position, and we too perhaps. You can believe me, because I look at the matter in a perfectly calm manner. I hope that your health has not suffered at all by the untoward news; I beg you not to worry yourself. We need regret nothing. We shall always be happy because we shall always love each other."

Two days later he writes another short note to his wife, in which he thanks her for her charming letters, tells her how glad he is that she approves of his conduct, and says he is proud to be her husband.

But sensitive, affectionate natures such as Eugène's was do not pass through the fiery ordeal of affliction unscathed. Years after, when the past had become a dream, when his mother had gone to her last rest in the little parish church at Rueil, Eugène's eyes would fill with tears when he spoke of this, *the most terrible period of his whole life.*

It was not that Eugène regretted his position as the Emperor's adopted son and all the material advantages attached thereto. No! His behaviour both before and after his mother's divorce show that he cared nothing for advancement. But it was the knowledge culled from experience that he would soon be forgotten by the man whom he loved and revered as if he had been his own father; it was the sight of his mother's grief and remorse, alas! too late to do any good.

But some drops still remained in the cup of bitterness.

From Trianon now came a request that Eugène would attend a private council at which the Emperor's family and all his Ministers were to assist. Eugène obeyed.

Nobody was surprised when, at that meeting, the Emperor announced his intention of marrying again, and said he intended to choose a bride from among the members of the Russian, Austrian or Prussian royal families. Of course his hearers applauded everything he said. When Eugène was asked his opinion, he remarked that an Austrian princess would be most suitable, as she would not have to change her religion on becoming Empress of the French.

When Napoleon, later, asked M. Metternich's wife in confidence if she thought that Marie-Louise, the daughter of his erstwhile foe, Francis I of Austria, would accept his hand in marriage, Mme. Metternich said she was not in a position to give an opinion, and advised him to apply to the Austrian ambassador, the Prince von Schwarzenberg.[1]

And whom did Napoleon choose to act as his spokesman in this delicate matter? Neither Louis, the weak-willed, some say epileptic, King of Holland; nor Lucien, who was an adept at political *double-entente;* nor clumsy Joseph; but poor Eugène—as if his devotion to the Emperor had not already caused him enough suffering.

So on the morrow Eugène appeared at the Austrian ambassador's *hôtel,* and in the Emperor's name and with the consent of the ex-Empress his mother, made overtures for the hand of Marie-Louise.

We know with what unseemly joy the father of that absolutely vapid princess accepted the Emperor's proposal; in giving this woman in marriage to Napoleon he revenged himself for all past humiliations.

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[1] *Schwarzenberg,* Charles Philip, prince von (1771–1820), a distinguished soldier and diplomatist.

Lucien tells us that he frequently heard Napoleon express regret about this time that he had married the Princess Augusta of Bavaria to Eugène, " who did not know how to appreciate her, and was often unfaithful to her." However, as the latter assertion is made by Lucien, and by no other biographer of the time, we need not take it seriously. Napoleon's regret at being unable to marry the Princess Augusta proves in what high esteem he held her. Had he been able to marry her, it would have been a love match—on his side at least—not a political marriage; for Maximilian of Bavaria was an insignificant personage, possessing neither influence nor large territories, nor even much common sense.

Eugène was kept in Paris on one pretext or another until February, 1810. During his sojourn in the capital he saw a good deal of his brother-in-law, Louis Bonaparte, for whom he felt much pity. The smouldering fire of enmity between Louis and Hortense had hitherto been hidden behind a screen of propriety, but now it was about to burst forth. Eugène and *Madame Mère* tried in vain to make peace between the young couple. When, later, Louis Bonaparte abdicated the throne of Holland, Napoleon treated him very harshly, set detectives upon him, and virtually kept him prisoner in France.

Eugène soon saw that changes were coming in the south of Europe. The first change was when, in the winter of 1809–10, Istria and Dalmatia were separated from the kingdom of Italy, reunited to the provinces of Illyria, and placed under the government of Marmont, the duc de Raguse. It is true that Italy received as compensation a portion of the Tyrol, which portion then took the name of the Upper Adige, with Trent as its capital. This may be termed Napoleon's first act of injustice towards his step-son. A decree quickly followed, by which the Roman provinces were united to the French Empire.

At last, on February 18th, 1810, Eugène returned to Milan, to the calm haven of home presided over by the excellent vice-reine. Within a week of his return, which, as in the previous November, was marked by all kinds of popular rejoicings, he received the following letter from his step-father:

"Paris, *February 26th,* 1810.

"My Son—The Emperor of Austria having granted my request for the hand of his daughter, the Archduchess Marie-Louise, of whose virtues and good qualities I am well aware, I have determined to fix the date of the celebration of my marriage in Paris for March 29th. I have sent the Prince de Neufchâtel to act as witness at the marriage by proxy, which will take place in Vienna, so that the Empress will reach Compiègne on the 23rd, when I shall hope to receive her. For this important ceremony, I have resolved to assemble the princes and princesses belonging to my family ; so I give you notice in this letter, hoping that nothing will prevent you being in Paris by March 20th."

Napoleon, on divorcing his wife, had promised that Eugène should not suffer in any way ; but when it was rumoured in Milan that Eugène, whom the Milanese had become accustomed to consider as their future king, was about to be presented with the grand-duchy of Frankfort (which, however, he never enjoyed) and no mention was made of Italy's fate, the least discontented of his subjects began to murmur.

An announcement bearing Napoleon's signature appeared in the *Moniteur* for March 4th, 1810, in which, after informing the people of Italy that he was going to make Eugène grand-duke of Frankfort on the death of the present owner of that title,[1] the Emperor paid the following tribute to the viceroy's virtues :

"We find much pleasure in giving another proof of our esteem and genuine affection for a young prince whose first steps in the art of governing and of making war we ourselves directed ; who, in the midst of so many vicissitudes, has never caused us a moment of displeasure, but who, on the contrary, has always seconded our efforts with a prudence beyond what we could expect at his age ; and latterly, at the head of our enemies, has shown no less courage than knowledge of the art of waging war. We therefore feel ourselves called upon to give him a permanent position in the elevated rank in which we placed him. . . ."

At the same time Napoleon wrote a long letter to his stepson, in which he vaguely spoke of giving him a principality, assured him that his fate should be settled, that he should enjoy an appanage which would give him an income of one million francs, together with the Villa Bonaparte at Milan for his life, and the grand-duchy of Frankfort on the death of the prince primate; a postscript ordered him to inform the Italian Senate of the forthcoming marriage of the Emperor of the French with the daughter of the Emperor of Austria, at the same time inviting all the chief Italian nobility to attend the ceremony in Paris.

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[1] Charles, baron von Dalberg (see note, p. 148).

The invitation was accepted by the viceroy and the vicereine, who, having confided their two little girls to the care of the baroness von Wurmbs and the comtesse de Sandizel, left Milan on March 12th with a small suite of attendants, including the duchesse de Litta as Augusta's lady-in-waiting.

On reaching Paris, March 20th, they first went to the Elysée Palace; but Augusta, in her anxiety to console her mother-in-law, with whom she was always on the best of terms, after spending a few days paying official visits, hurried off to La Malmaison, where she tried to divert the ex-Empress's mind from the sad present by telling her stories of her little granddaughters' pretty ways, and by assuring her that Josephine and Hortense were longing to make their grandmama's acquaintance.

The baron Darnay is responsible for a report which M. Pulitzer reproduces in his charming work *Le Roman du prince Eugène*, and which says that the Emperor offered the crown of Sweden to the viceroy of Italy during his visit to Paris. The baron Darnay tells us that Duroc, who had a very soft place in his heart for Eugène, twice endeavoured to persuade him to accept this valuable gift, but Eugène refused, giving as his reasons that he was quite content with his position in Italy, that he did not wish to change his religion (which he would have to do if he accepted the crown), and that he feared that, as he had done nothing to deserve the esteem of the Swedish people, he would be unable to win their affection. Even when Duroc warned him that, in the event of the Emperor having two sons, he, Eugène, would certainly be pushed on one side, and the throne of Italy would be given to the youngest born, the viceroy did not waver. And he was supported in his resolution by his helpmate. M. Darnay adds that the Emperor, on learning Eugène's decision, remarked that perhaps he was right to refuse, and that he was not offended by his behaviour.

Eugène and Augusta were not allowed to shirk any of their social duties—and humiliations. They had to appear at all the Court fêtes given before and after the marriage ceremony. Augusta must have overheard many a whispered remark as she passed through those crowded *salons* on the arm of her good husband, whose portrait, taken about this time, bears a remarkable resemblance to that of the prince consort, Albert the Good.

" Who is that lady ? "

" Oh ! that is the vice-reine of Italy—you know, the wife of Eugène de Beauharnais, the son of the *ex-Empress*."

Eugène and his wife were present at the ball given by the prince von Schwarzenberg in an impromptu ballroom made of wood erected in the garden of his *hôtel* in the rue du Mont Blanc, when so many rich and titled people were burnt to death through a candle setting light to some drapery. Six hundred invitations had been sent out. Eugène had just opened the ball with Princess Pauline von Schwarzenberg when the fire broke out. Three minutes later the whole structure was a mass of flames. The Emperor and the Empress being close to the entrance were able to escape without any difficulty, but Eugène was some distance from his wife, who was seated on a platform at the other end of the ballroom. His partner rushed from him and disappeared into the smoke and flames. He himself was in imminent danger of being burnt to death when he discovered a little door, which had been used by the footmen to bring refreshments, leading to some private apartments, and through this door he escaped and joined his wife before she realized that he had been in any great danger. Eugène, whose presence of mind had enabled him to save his own life, was able to help several other persons to escape through this same door.

In June the vice-regal pair left Paris, when Eugène went to visit his mother, who was enjoying her annual cure at Aix-les-Bains ; he then joined his wife, and they returned to Monza over the Simplon Pass.

The rest of the summer was spent by Eugène in attending to the affairs of his kingdom. In September he paid a visit to Venice, which seaport Napoleon was anxious should be protected from the attacks of the English, whose commerce, as we have already seen, had been considerably damaged by his very successfúl continental system.

CHAPTER X

Napoleon's thoughtfulness for his late wife—An engagement with the English off Lissa—Eugène's eldest son is born—He devotes himself to his little family—Eugène has to come up to Paris for the birth of the King of Rome—He goes to stay with his mother—He returns to Italy—A new war appears upon the horizon—The Russian campaign—The Emperor abandons his post—Eugène accepts the post of commander-in-chief.

IN the month of October, 1810, Napoleon, thinking that the ex-Empress would feel her loneliness less if she went to stay with her son in Italy, wrote her the following kind letter:

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *October 1st*, 1810.

"I have received your letter. Hortense, whom I have just seen, will tell you what I think would be best for you to do. Go and see your son this winter; you can then take the cure at Aix next year or else spend the spring at Navarre. I should advise you to go to Navarre immediately if I were not afraid that you would be dull there. I think you cannot do better than pass the winter in Milan or at Navarre. You may do as you like in other matters, as far as I am concerned."

But Josephine had no intention of going to Milan, where she would be only the mother of the viceroy, and so she wrote to Hortense:

"... I would gladly have undertaken the journey if it had only been a question of spending one or two months in Italy with my dear Eugène; but I could not have made up my mind to leave France for six months, for, by so doing, I should have grieved all my friends."

Though fallen from her high estate, Josephine still appears to have considered herself of great importance, and her presence necessary to the well-being and happiness of him who was now entirely wrapped up in his young wife.

In the month of October Eugène organized a most successful expedition against Lissa, an island on the coast of Dalmatia, which at that time was rather famous for its wine and for anchovy and pilchard fisheries, and which had been practically captured by the English, and used as a storehouse for the merchandise which they had seized or were anxious to smuggle into Italy.

Eugène writes to his step-father from Ancona, whither he had gone in order to superintend the expedition :

" Ancona, *October 27th*, 1810.

" Sire—I have the honour to inform Your Majesty that Captain Dubourdieu's squadron returned to this port last night. I enclose that officer's report concerning the brilliant success of the expedition which Your Majesty kindly authorized me to undertake. Captain Dubourdieu left Ancona with his squadron the night of the 19th inst., and reached Lissa on the morning of the 22nd. Having hoisted an English flag, part of the squadron entered the port that same day, while the other vessels cruised about to the windward side of the island. Captain Dubourdieu, finding no English men-of-war in the port of Lissa and seeing no preparations for resistance on shore, landed two of the companies which he had brought with him. My aide-de-camp, Colonel Gifflenga, was told to carry the matter through. When every precaution had been taken to prevent any vessels escaping, Your Majesty's flag was hoisted in place of the English flag ; our boats then having advanced towards the enemy's vessels, we seized every ship in the port (which is the haunt of all the pirates in the Adriatic), and burnt an immense quantity of merchandise. Captain Dubourdieu, unwilling to undertake more than he could manage, only seized 10 vessels, including 3 splendid corsairs. The results of this expedition were 42 ships burnt, of which 33 were laden ; 9 corsairs destroyed, having on board 64 cannons and a quantity of arms of all kinds ; 14 vessels restored to divers of Your Majesty's subjects ; 10 vessels, including 3 corsairs and 7 boats laden with merchandise, taken to Your Majesty's ports ; 100 prisoners and 25 French and Italian captives set at liberty. They were unable to catch 20 officers and 200 men who took refuge in the steep mountains on the island. The enemy lost 68 vessels and 100 cannons in all ; I do not exaggerate when I estimate the loss to English commerce at 20 millions.

"Your Majesty's squadron returned without having had any losses or any cases of illness. . . ."

Napoleon, however, found fault with Captain Dubourdieu for not having captured the 20 English officers and 200 men, for, he wrote : "200 sailors would have been a serious loss to the English." (!)

On November 4th Eugène received an intimation from the Emperor, who was then at Fontainebleau, to the effect that he was to announce to the Italian Senate that the Empress was in an interesting condition ; a postscript added in the Emperor's own handwriting told him to command the bishops of Italy to offer up prayers for her safe delivery.

But Mrs. Stork was about to pay another visit to the vice-regal family in Milan. On December 9th, 1810, Augusta gave birth to her eldest son, the long-expected, much-desired child, who, had he been born three or four years ago, *might* have saved his parents and his grandmother many tears, and prevented much bloodshed.

This child received the names of Auguste-Charles-Eugène-Napoléon, and its birth was heralded by popular rejoicings. The Emperor, however, expressed but little interest in his "son's" child. Things had strangely altered during the last few months. Napoleon still called Eugène his "son" when writing to him, but his letters were no longer those of a father to his child ; they merely contained directions concerning the government of the kingdom of Italy—or blame.

We find one exception, however, in the Emperor's letter about the baptism of Eugène's son :

"PARIS, *January 9th*, 1811.

"My Son—I thought I had replied to your letter concerning your son. I think it would be a good thing to call him *Auguste-Napoléon*. I and the Empress will be his godparents; let me know if you wish his christening to be postponed until I come to Italy, or if you wish him to be baptized at once. In the latter case I would send someone to represent me."

The next few months were spent very happily by Eugène amid his little family. And indeed Augusta was such a devoted wife that he would have been a very discontented person if he had wished to change places with any of the sycophants with whom Napoleon's Court was now more than ever infested.

And then Augusta was such a tender mother—and wise, too, as the following short anecdote proves. One of her little girls had been heard ordering one of her mother's ladies-in-waiting to do something or the other without having first said " please." The vice-reine said nothing to the culprit, but told her lady-in-waiting not to obey any of the little girl's commands, nor even to reply to her, in future. The child, angry at no notice being taken of her cries, soon came to her mama complaining that Madame So-and-so would not attend to her. Whereupon her mother said :

" *Mademoiselle,* when little girls like you can do nothing for themselves, and have to get somebody to help them, they have to learn to be polite and thoughtful of others."

She then told the little girl to go and beg the lady-in-waiting to forgive her for her rudeness, and in future, if she asked in a proper manner, all her wishes would be attended to. The child did not require a second lesson.

But the viceroy's time was not all occupied with these domestic pleasures ; he built more schools, founded a college for girls in Milan, opened a Scientific Institution with branches in Venice, Bologna, Padua and Verona. He promised a reward of one million francs for the inventor of the best spinning-machine.

The Pope was still giving trouble and urging the clergy to revolt against the French government at every opportunity. And England was keeping a very sharp eye upon matters in Italy. Unfortunately history does not record the name of the individual mentioned in the following letter from the Emperor to the viceroy, but he was probably an English subject living in Italy, and it is more than probable that he had cause to regret his loquacity :

" PARIS, *January 11th,* 1811.

" My Son—I send you a letter which appeared in several English newspapers ; it is not the first time that letters from this individual have been translated for me. Who is he ? Has he got any property ? What is he about ? "

And added in the Emperor's own handwriting we find these words:

"*Have his property seized.*"

The vice-reine suffered much soon after the birth of her son with rheumatism in her right hand, for which complaint she was ordered to take the waters at Padua ; she was still doing her cure when Eugène was summoned to Paris to be present at the birth of the little King of Rome.

While in Paris the viceroy stayed at his own *hôtel*, the decorations of which, as my readers may remember, had once been made the subject of a terrible scolding for him. He often went to see his mother at Navarre and La Malmaison, where he was a great favourite with the members of Josephine's miniature Court, and he was just as popular with the men as with the ladies, which shows that he was not a "ladies' man." His appearance at his mother's house was the signal for all sorts of amusements, such as fishing in the ornamental waters, when the cleverest fisherman or fisherwoman received a prize from the viceroy ; or playing billiards for more prizes (Eugène always took care to lose) ; or singing, at which he was an adept, for, although he did not know a note of music, he only needed to hear a song once or twice to be able to sing it straight off without a mistake, and he never forgot what he had once learnt.

An enemy to etiquette, he liked to appear unannounced, so that his mother's ladies might not be obliged to rise whenever he entered her *salon*. When his mother, who loved ceremony above all things, used to protest at his sudden appearance through an open window in pouring rain, he would say :

"It is quite enough to be obliged to put up with all the annoyances attendant upon government when I am in Milan ; at least let me amuse myself when I am here. *'Tis a difficult task to be a king when one has not been brought up to it,*" which remark must have been very unwelcome to the ex-Empress.

His face would light up in an extraordinary manner while relating his military adventures. He always wore attached to his watch-chain a miniature of his wife and children painted by Isabey.

On March 21st Eugène appeared at Navarre, whither his step-father had sent him immediately after the birth of the King of Rome, saying :

" You are going to see your mother, Eugène. Tell her that I am sure that she, more than anybody else, will rejoice to hear of my happiness. I would have already written to her had I not been so entirely absorbed in the pleasure of gazing at my son. I can only tear myself away from him when I am absolutely obliged to do so. But I will discharge the sweetest of all duties to-night—I will write to Josephine."

Eugène was soon followed by one of the Emperor's pages, M. de Saint-Hilaire by name, who appeared at eleven o'clock that same night, just as Josephine and her son and suite were taking tea, bearing the promised letter, which ended thus :

" This child, together with *our Eugène*, will ensure happiness to me and to France."

Josephine, who liked to do things in style on important occasions, wanted to give the Emperor's messenger a present worth 12,000 francs,[1] out of all proportion to her income. Eugène, however, persuaded her to limit her generosity to a more suitable gift.

It is interesting to note how Napoleon, in his unspeakable joy at becoming a father, turned to his divorced wife. It would almost seem as if he knew that she, as the mother of Eugène, could best realize what he was now experiencing. But did he not turn to her on other and more tragic occasions, when he abdicated at Fontainebleau ? And did he not evoke her memory when he went to bid farewell to La Malmaison before leaving France for ever ?

And yet he, at that time, loved his young, doll-like, absolutely insignificant wife with all his heart. Did he not cry to the surgeon Dubois when she was in danger of losing her life, and it was thought that the long-desired child must be sacrificed :

" Treat my wife as if she were the wife of a shopkeeper in the rue Saint-Denis ! . . . Save my wife ! I don't care what else happens ! " ?

Poor Napoleon ! And Marie-Louise later forgot all his love for her, and talked of him as if he had never been anything but a tyrant.

Thinking to prevent his mother lamenting with bitter regret the fact that she had never been able to give the Emperor the inexpressible bliss of clasping a little child, his own flesh and blood, to his heart, Eugène began to describe to Josephine and her suite a very amusing scene witnessed by him at the Tuileries on the night preceding the birth of the eaglet. It seems that the Queen of Naples and her sister Pauline (who by this time had got rid of her husband), together with several other members of the Imperial family and the chief witnesses at the birth, were all assembled in an adjoining room waiting for the happy event. Pauline and Caroline affected to be much concerned on hearing the Empress's groans, swore that they could not bear such suspense, that their sister-in-law's cries got upon their nerves, that they were sure they were about to faint, insisted upon having all the windows thrown open, and altogether behaved in a foolish manner. The general impression, however, was that they were suffering more from temper than from nerves. Was not the question of an heir about to be settled for ever?

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[1] 12,000 francs : £480.

Mais l'homme propose et Dieu dispose.

During this visit, Josephine, who had not forgotten that her son's wife had also borne a son lately, gave Eugène, to take to Augusta, a magnificent diamond ornament; she also wanted Eugène to accept a valuable gilt toilet-set which had been presented to her in the happy past by the city of Paris; however, the viceroy refused to take it.

Josephine made an excellent grandmama; she turned her *salon* into a veritable toyshop in her desire to give pleasure to her grandchildren in Milan. She would order a large selection of playthings to be sent to Navarre, or La Malmaison, from Paris; each toy was carefully examined by Josephine before it was placed in the packing-cases. There were tin soldiers, guns, drums and swords for little Auguste, while Josephine and Hortense received dolls, miniature dinner-sets and kitchen utensils, dolls' houses and other delightful toys, all fashioned with that consummate taste and skill for which Paris has always been celebrated.

It was during one of Eugène's visits to his mother's retreat that some busybody spread a report that he had conceived a hopeless attachment for one of Josephine's ladies-in-waiting, a young girl, Georgette Ducrest by name, who afterwards wrote two interesting volumes of memoirs. This report, which was utterly devoid of any truth, led to the dismissal of the unfortunate girl, whose only fault lay in the fact that she was not so stupid as her fellow ladies-in-waiting, and that, as she was very musical, she had been able to assist the viceroy to learn some of the little operettas with which Josephine's entourage tried to enliven their monotonous existence.

On the occasion of the baptism of the King of Rome, the Emperor wrote the following letter of instructions to Eugène:

"Palace of the Tuileries (*undated*).

"My Son—I have decided that on June 2nd, Whit-Sunday, the King of Rome shall be baptized in the cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris. *Te Deums* must be sung in all the churches in my Empire on that day, and thanksgiving prayers for his birth must be offered to God. I desire similar prayers to be offered in my kingdom of Italy, and that you inform the bishops by letter that such is my wish. You will also charge the Minister of the Interior to send instructions to the mayors of all the towns in my kingdom concerning the fêtes and rejoicings which are to take place everywhere on that day, and he will settle what sums they can spend on these fêtes. You will also send me a list of all poor, orphaned girls in each town, so that they may be dowered and given in marriage to retired soldiers. I also wish you to invite to Paris for the baptism of the King of Rome the mayors of the good towns in the kingdom, each of whom must be accompanied by two deputies chosen from among the principal members of each municipality. My Minister of the Interior will advance to each the necessary travelling expenses, so that, during their stay in Paris, they may appear suitably clothed; their companions must wear the uniform of the towns they represent. Herewith, my son, I pray God to have you in His holy keeping."

Eugène was detained in Paris several months attending to different matters concerning the army and the government of Italy. He accompanied Napoleon when the latter went to visit Cherbourg.

On his return to Milan he found Augusta quite recovered from her attack of rheumatism. The rest of the year 1811, which was perhaps one of the least eventful in Eugène's

(Photo: Stuffler Munich)

EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS AND NAPOLEON I IN 1812

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career as viceroy of Italy, was spent in preparing for the new war which was looming in the distance; for Napoleon's *folie des grandeurs* had only been aggravated by the birth of the eaglet, for whom he wanted to conquer more possessions; and indeed, if Fate had permitted that eaglet to roam as far over the surface of the globe as his sire had done, he would have needed plenty of room in which to preen his wings.

On this occasion, as on the eve of Napoleon's second great European campaign, Eugène received orders to make his preparations as quietly as possible.

Early in the year 1812 Napoleon sent Eugène secret orders to cross the Alps with his 4th corps, composed of Italian troops, and the 6th corps, composed of Bavarian soldiers—70,000 or 80,000 troops in all. Shortly before starting, he wrote to his friend Lavalette a letter in which he mentions a report which was causing him a good deal of annoyance about that time:

"MILAN, *February 22nd*, 1812.

"... At last my fate is settled; I have been given a superb post; and although my appointment has not appeared in the gazettes, I feel that I can inform you of it. I am to command the 4th corps; so you see I shall have from 70,000 to 80,000 men and about 200 cannons.

"All the generals, officers and soldiers who have been in Paris lately assure me that it is said that I shall have command of the cavalry. At all events, I shall have a good post; I shall always prefer a post where I can prove my entire devotion to His Majesty's cause.

"I should find one thing, however, no laughing matter, and that is if I saw my wretched self fixed permanently in Poland. A report has lately been spread that this is about to happen, and I can assure you that it has really pained me. I could not bear to be so far away from the Emperor; I only have one ambition, and that is to live and die as near to him as possible. You will say that I am not hard to please, and you are right. But this ambition is just as good as any other; one thing is certain, and that is that I am not ambitious to obtain a throne. . . ."

So we see that there had been some talk of giving Eugène Poland, whose inhabitants would gladly have welcomed him as their sovereign. But, as on a previous occasion when it was said he had been offered the crown of Sweden, Eugène, unwilling to exchange his viceroyship for any throne whatsoever, refused.

On April 18th Eugène bade farewell to his wife, who was again in an interesting condition, and crossed the Alps with his troops over the Brenner Pass, a particularly hazardous journey at this time of the year owing to the great masses of melting snow and ice which fell and frequently blocked the pass.

On reaching Paris, Eugène hurried off to Saint-Cloud, where he had a brief interview with the Emperor, returning to the capital that same day by La Malmaison, where he found his mother making preparations for her usual cure, after which she proposed to pay a visit to her daughter-in-law in Milan, who had made a very favourable impression upon the Parisians, as Eugène found when he began to pay some of his official visits.

Eugène was much surprised to find that there was little or no talk of a war in the capital ; he was assured by one or two well-informed persons that everything could still be arranged.

As he himself told Augusta, " Paris was the worst place for gossip imaginable " ; however, the rumour that the King of Westphalia, Jérôme Bonaparte, was about to be offered the throne of Poland caused Eugène keen satisfaction ; he had no wish to leave Italy.

The viceroy was invited to all the fêtes which were given in Paris by the Emperor before starting for that terrible campaign in Russia which every admirer of Napoleon must wish had never been undertaken. Marie-Louise took considerable notice of Eugène, displayed interest in and admiration for his pretty children, and even invited him to take a hand at her whist-table, whereupon he wrote to his wife these words : " You would do well to write to her."

On May 1st Eugène received orders from the Emperor to place himself at the head of his troops, and to march towards Mayence.

It is as well, before putting all the blame for this action upon Napoleon, to realize that already in the autumn of 1811 five Russian divisions had assumed a position opposite Warsaw with a view to forcing him to go to war. The peaceable proposals made by him through the comte de Narbonne[1] had been rejected ; for the Emperor Alexander, exasperated by the continental system, was determined to resist Napoleon, who now concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Austria, Prussia and the Confederation of the Rhine, and prepared to march towards the Russian frontier. However, as officers still came and went between Saint Petersburg and Paris, it was hoped up to the very last minute that a war could be avoided. And then it was said that the two Emperors were to have an interview, from which great things were expected. But Napoleon was rushing along towards his doom, and nothing could save him from himself.

Eugène started for the war with a light heart ; he was not only pleased that he had been given such an important post, but he was also glad to have some Bavarian troops under his command.

Mayence was reached May 5th, and Pilnitz three days later, where he paid a visit to the Saxon royal family, on which occasion everybody, as he tells his wife, was most kind to him and asked affectionately after his family. On May 11th he arrived at Glogau, where he found more of his troops waiting for him.

At Thorn, Napoleon and Eugène met for a few hours ; the former then pursued his way via Heilsberg to Eylau, while the latter turned towards the north-east, with the King of Westphalia's troops.

A letter written from Plock, May 15th, tells Augusta that he has already marched nearly six hundred leagues, and that, although hardly a month has elapsed since he bade her farewell, it seems to him as if it were a century ago.

In two letters written from Soldau and Rastenburg, and dated June 6th and June 14th, he speaks of his splendid army, says that he hopes that the coming winter will see the end of the war, tells Augusta that he longs to clasp her in his arms again, and ends with this sentence :

" We find it very difficult to get food ; I often cannot sleep for wondering how I shall manage to find food for my 80,000 troops, for sometimes we cannot even get ten sacks of corn; however, the farther we march the nearer we get to the harvest, and that is some comfort. . . ."

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[1] *Narbonne-Lara*, comte Louis de (1755–1813): distinguished soldier and diplomatist ; was obliged to fly to England on account of his political opinions after Louis XVI's execution. He re-entered the French army in 1809, accompanied Napoleon to Russia as his aide-de-camp, was sent to Vienna as French ambassador, and took part in the Congress of Prague.

In his next letter he alludes to the Polish question which seems to have caused him and his wife considerable annoyance:

"Rastenburg, *June 17th*, 1812.

"My beloved Augusta—You need have no fears concerning the Polish question; the matter will probably be arranged without any difficulty. The Poles have done their best to persuade me to become their Governor, but I would hear nothing of it, and I let them see that they only pained me by insisting. It really looks as if they were in earnest about the matter; I send you, as a proof of this fact, two letters which I have just received from some of their number; you need not show them to anybody else. They talk quite openly in Warsaw about having me as their king. At present I am almost sure that such will not be the case. We shall certainly spend the coming winter together, my good Augusta. I look forward to the future, although I am well aware that it is impossible to be happier than we have already been. I realize my great happiness, and I love you all the more in consequence."

Napoleon was now about to cross the Niemen with his huge army of 475,000 troops and 1200 guns. The three divisions of the Russian army which occupied the districts around Kief, Smolensk and Riga, gradually retreated as the grand army advanced farther into the country; the Russians' plan of campaign was to avoid a decisive battle, whereas Napoleon usually preferred to force his enemies to give battle, crush them by superior numbers, and thus oblige them to surrender.

On June 24th Napoleon crossed the Niemen and the Russian campaign commenced in earnest. Before beginning to attack, the Emperor made a long speech to his troops, which concluded with these words:

"Russia is being hurled along the road of doom. She must accomplish her destiny. Are we no longer to be regarded as the soldiers of Austerlitz? Let us carry the war into her own country; a second war in Poland will be as productive of glory to the French army as the first was."

But Fate, of whom Napoleon was so fond of talking, was about to deal him some hard blows. Disaster fell upon him almost as soon as he had crossed the Niemen. As we have already seen, Eugène had experienced considerable difficulty in victualling his troops ; that difficulty increased a thousandfold as the French army penetrated deeper into Russia, until it eventually became one of the causes of Napoleon's ruin. The changeable climate, the excessive heat, followed by days of incessant rain and sudden cold, told upon the French troops ; and before they had been many days in Russia hundreds of them were ill with fevers and chills.

On June 27th the two armies came in sight of one another. Several small engagements took place without any particular result being produced upon the Russian army, except that it was being steadily driven towards Moscow. Napoleon entered Vilna on the morrow, and here he stayed for some days. Eugène tells his wife in the following letter something about the climate with which his troops had to put up :

"VILNA, *July 6th*, 1812, 8 a.m.

"I found your letters dated June 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th waiting for me at Vilna ; you can imagine how delighted I was to get them. . . . Would you believe it, that on July 1st it became so cold after a thunderstorm that we had to light fires ? There is hardly any night here, for one can still see to read a letter at 10 o'clock at night, and one can see quite well at 2 o'clock in the morning. Yesterday the Emperor asked me a great many questions about you. I begged him to allow me to call our next little darling after him, if it should be a boy. He replied, 'Yes, gladly.'"

"SOLECZNIKY, *July 9th*, 1812.

"I have not written to you since we left Vilna, my dear Augusta, for I have not had a minute's rest for the last three days. We are pursuing Bagration's[1] army, and we find it a difficult matter to keep up with him. I am well. My carriages have all been delayed, and I have only got a portmanteau with me. I expect the army will be allowed to take a little rest in a few days' time, for we have been on the march every day since we left Plock. I hope that this letter will reach you after your confinement. It will tell you how sorry I am to be so far away. I hope that you will get well very quickly. Give ten big kisses to the tiny creature which will have come into the world by the time this letter reaches you. . . ."

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[1] *Bagration*, Prince Peter (1765–1812) : Russian soldier and councillor, who especially distinguished himself in the campaigns in Italy under Suvarrof, and was mortally wounded during the Battle of Moscow. To him was entrusted the 2nd Russian Western army, comprised of 48,000 troops.

From Smorghoni he writes four days later telling his wife that, although they have now been nearly three weeks in Russia, he has only seen one Cossack all that time, and that not more than ten bullets have been fired. He adds: " I should not be at all surprised if this campaign were not even more extraordinary than the others, and did not finish without a battle."

But that battle was not very far distant.

Smolensk, the bulwark of Moscow, was about to fall into the hands of the French, who, harassed by sickness and hunger, had been obliged to halt for ten days. On August 17th 12,000 Russian cavalry troops attacked General Sébastiani,[1] who was driven back with considerable loss, until Napoleon ordered the right wing of his army, under Poniatowski's[2] command, to hasten by way of Ortza and cut the Russians off from Moscow. The day was one of the most bloody in the history of warfare; it was not until midnight of August 17th that the French army, after losing many thousand troops, obtained possession of Smolensk, which the Russians had taken care to burn before abandoning it. On the very day of this battle Napoleon summoned Eugène to his tent and informed him that he had just learnt from a messenger that the telegraph at Milan had sent the news to Paris that the vice-reine had borne him another daughter on July 3rd. This child was baptized Amélie.

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[1] *Sébastiani*, Horace (1775–1851): fought side by side with his compatriot, General Bonaparte, in Italy and Egypt. In 1806 he was sent as French ambassador to Constantinople, which city he helped the Turks to defend against the English. He fought bravely in Spain, where he was unable to remain, however, owing to Joseph Bonaparte's jealous disposition. He was one of the first French soldiers to enter Moscow. After Waterloo he was chosen to negotiate with the confederate sovereigns. Although Louis XVIII did not value his services, Louis-Philippe determined to make use of his diplomatic talents, and so he was sent as ambassador to Naples and afterwards to London. He retired from public life in 1840.

[2] *Poniatowski*, Joseph (1763–1813), nephew of the last King of Poland: first served in the Austrian army, then defended his country against the Russians. He placed himself at the head of the Polish troops in 1812, and was created marshal of France by Napoleon after the Battle of Leipsic and ordered to cover the retreat of the French army, which he did at the cost of his own life.

Josephine had joined her daughter-in-law soon after Eugène's departure ; the reception accorded to her by the Milanese had surprised and touched her. Perhaps Josephine valued and appreciated her royal daughter-in-law all the more because she herself no longer occupied a throne. Such a daughter-in-law as Augusta was certainly worth having. Could the viceroy's mother have read the future she would have valued her even more. During Eugène's absence in Russia Augusta inhabited the Villa Bonaparte, where she gave her mother-in-law Eugène's suite of apartments, and altogether treated her as if she were her own mother.

Two days later the French army entered the ruined, corpse-strewn town. Eugène writes from the camp outside Smolensk :

"*August* 19*th*, 1812.

" My good Augusta—I have not been able to write to you for three days, because we have been in sight of the enemy all the time. The Emperor having decided to attack the town of Smolensk, we did so, and captured it with great loss to the enemy. My corps had nothing to do but to look on. Yesterday we caught sight of the Russian army drawn up in battle array. We received orders to cross over the river this morning, which we are now doing. The enemy disappeared during the night, leaving only the rear-guard behind them. As I write to you I can hear the cannons thundering, but the enemy are being repulsed. My troops have not yet finished crossing the river. We have been encamped outside this town for the last three days. The Emperor has sent nearly all the commanders of the different corps to the outposts. It really looked at daybreak as if the enemy might have been very successful ; however, they made off during the night, so it does not seem likely that we shall have a decisive battle, although we have done our best to provoke one. I hate this state of uncertainty more than anything else. . . . The days are very hot and the nights very cold. They say that we shall have winter before another month has elapsed. Adieu. I remain for life your faithful husband and best friend."

On September 1st Napoleon learnt that the Russian general, Barclay de Tolly,[1] distrustful of his own powers, had resigned the command of the Russian troops to Kutusoff,[2] the conqueror of the Turks, and reputed to be the cleverest soldier in the Russian army. This general had sworn to save Moscow. He determined to made a stand; having reinforced his army by militia and reserve forces, he took up his position seventy miles from Moscow, and awaited Napoleon. The latter soon perceived that he no longer had to deal with a retreating army; he made his preparations for the great battle which he saw was about to be fought. His written instructions to Eugène, Marmont and his numerous generals are veritable marvels; every emergency is provided for; nothing is left to chance, the chances of war often so unexpected and so disastrous in their effects. Special attention is given to the ambulance corps; this wonderful soldier-emperor even calculates how many wounds a surgeon can dress in an hour! Medicines, drugs, dressings, stores, ammunition, carriages, baggage, waggons—nothing is forgotten. Each general is told not only what he has to do, but about what hour he will be called upon to execute his various movements.

The first step was taken on September 5th, when Murat and Compans[3] captured the redoubt of Schwardino.

On September 7th the great Battle of the Moskowa, during which 25,000 Russian and 15,000 French troops died for their respective Emperors, and 90,000 men were placed *hors de combat*, was fought. Eugène commanded the left wing of the French army, and contributed no less than Ney,[4] Murat and Davout to the success of the Imperial eagles. The very forces of Nature seemed at war that day ; the wind blew and the rain fell upon the heaps of dead and dying, thereby increasing the sufferings of the latter to a fearful degree. The enemy decamped as soon as night began to fall, leaving their wounded to the tender mercies of the French, who had more than they could manage to attend to their own wounded. On the morrow, Eugène, in whom the Emperor placed entire confidence, received orders to cross the Moskowa. It was said that the Russian army had determined not to allow the French troops to enter the City of Chapels. But the fact is that such disorder and depression reigned in the army that any serious resistance was out of the question.

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[1] *Barclay de Tolly*, Michael (1761–1818): a Russian general who fought bravely in the German and Polish campaigns of 1806 and 1807 and was made field-marshal. He succeeded Kutusoff as commander-in-chief, headed the Russian troops at the Battle of Leipsic, and entered Paris as victor in 1815. He received the title of prince as a reward for his services in the Russian army.

[2] *Kutusoff*, Michael (1745–1813): surnamed *Smolenskoi* to commemorate his victories, served in Poland and against the Turks. In 1805 he was given chief command of the first Russian corps against the French, and he headed the allied army at Austerlitz, where he was wounded. He was sixty-eight years of age when, in 1812, the chief command of the Russian army destined to oppose Napoleon was given to him.

[3] *Compans*, Jean Dominique (1769–1845): devoted his brilliant talents as a soldier to the service of the Emperor, and thereby earned the latter's esteem and affection. He was made *pair de France* during the Restauration.

[4] *Ney*, Michel (1769–1815): duc d'Elchingen, prince de la Moskowa, and marshal. He covered himself with glory during the Russian campaign of 1812. Although made *pair de France* by Louis XVIII, he hastened to the Emperor's side during the *Cent-Jours*, for which he was afterwards arrested, condemned to death and shot.

The town of Moscow was in a truly terrible state. The news of the defeat of Kutusoff the Unconquerable, fell like a bomb upon the inhabitants. A panic seized the town. An exodus, headed by the nobility, the rich merchants and tradespeople, took place ; but before leaving Moscow the fugitives determined to imitate the example of the inhabitants of Smolensk, so that Napoleon should not find the winter quarters upon which he had been counting. Count Rostoptchin, by setting fire to his palace with his own hand, gave the signal for a general conflagration. To his wife Eugène gives his impressions of the scene after the fire had done its work :

"Moscow, *September* 18*th*, 1812.

"I could not send Allari[1] yesterday, as I hoped to do, because I was with the Emperor the whole day, my dearest Augusta. I shall send him to-morrow at daybreak ; he will certainly be 28 or 30 days *en route*. This city is almost entirely in ashes ; it was one of the most beautiful towns in Europe. There were numerous magnificent palaces. The Russians have been guilty of the utmost barbarity in thus ruining 300,000 inhabitants and 600 of the greatest *seigneurs* in Russia, in order to prevent us obtaining possession of their flour, wine, furs and cattle. We were able to arrest about 30 of these miserable wretches just as they were in the very act of setting fire to some buildings. Many were massacred upon the spot by our infuriated soldiers ; enough remain, however, to be tried and judged, and among their number is an officer wearing a Russian order. All the wretches confessed that they had been ordered and paid to act thus by the Governor of Moscow. You cannot imagine what a horrible sight the fire was! From 8 to 10,000 inhabitants remained in the town; they are now naked, starving, without a roof over their heads, at the beginning of a season which is particularly hard in these parts; it is awful!"

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[1] One of Eugène' aides-de-camps.

"FROM THE CAMP OUTSIDE MOSCOW, *September 21st*, 1812.

"We had two very severe thunderstorms, both yesterday and the day before, my dear Augusta; it has only just stopped raining, and we much hope that the rainy season will soon be over. I expect we shall very soon be off now; there is some talk of sending troops towards St. Petersburg, and my corps will probably be chosen. The question of winter quarters will be settled later; but it is pretty certain that we shall not fight again this year. It is even thought that the Russians may consent to make peace when they find that we are quite determined to stay in their country.

"I expect you are following our movements on the map; I hope you have been able to procure a good one of Russia. I spent last evening with the Emperor; we played at *vingt-et-un* in order to pass the time. I fancy we shall find the evenings very long, for there are no amusements here, not even a billiard table. Adieu, my dearest Augusta; amusements or no amusements, I long with all my heart to be with you and our dear children."

Notwithstanding the havoc caused by the fire, Eugène was able to buy a fur pelisse for Augusta; he tells her that he is sorry it is not handsomer, but the town is in such disorder that he can find nothing better; he adds that he is trying to find some toys for the little *choux*, but it is a difficult matter, "for there are literally nothing but bears here."

His letters were probably frequently intercepted, for in one he says he is afraid that they serve to amuse *Messieurs les Cosaques*, instead of calming his wife's fears concerning his safety.

The cold became more intense. Eugène's troops, accustomed to a southern winter, must have felt it much more than the French soldiers.

In the following letter we learn that Josephine had left Milan and returned to La Malmaison :

"Moscow, *September* 28*th*, 1812.

"The courier has started with the furs and a small store of tea ; he will arrive in time, I hope, for your first *soirée* when tea will take the place of ices. Here we shall have more ice than tea, and everybody is getting out their fur coats in consequence ; as for me, I shall wrap myself up in fur from top to toe. It began to snow a little this morning. The weather is now cold and dry, which is far better than rain. I received your letters of September 4th, 5th and 6th, and I am very glad to hear that you are well. I can quite understand your sorrow at my mother's departure ; I am sure that you found her what she really is, kind-hearted. You will feel very sad and very lonely. I suppose you are still at Monza. Has it been improved? Do the hares still nibble at the young trees? Are there many pheasants? Do you see that all goes smoothly at the villa? I should much like to hear a few details. . . ."

In the beginning of October matters looked more favourable ; the weather, though bitterly cold, was drier, and the condition of the wounded improved in consequence. And then Napoleon's efforts to obtain provisions had been more successful. But the necessaries of daily existence were wanting, and hand-mills for grinding corn had to be procured from France. So favourable in fact did affairs look at one time, that the Emperor even talked of having doctors from Paris, and asked Eugène to get a troop of singers from Italy, whose music he loved above all other. But as the days went by Napoleon saw that a long stay in Moscow was impossible. He then endeavoured to negotiate with the Emperor of Russia ; a cessation of hostilities was ordered. But Russia, backed by England, fully aware that Napoleon was now in a very awkward position, his army suffering from illness, cold and hunger, refused to come to terms. Alexander said : "Now the sword is drawn, I will not again sheath it as long as one enemy remains in my dominions." And he kept his word.

The coming winter promised to be very severe. Napoleon now made a great effort to gather the *débris* of his army together, so as to hide the ravages which death and sickness had made in its ranks. Perhaps Eugène was not surprised when he heard from the Emperor's lips that he was about to commence a retrograde march, as he considered Smolensk a more suitable place in which to pass the winter. This march, or rather retreat, began October 19th, and what a retreat it was! What were Eugène's feelings on leaving Moscow? Did he realize that the eagles were flying back to France?

And now Napoleon's troubles began.

On leaving the shelter of Moscow the French army was almost immediately attacked by Kutusoff; Murat's quick action alone prevented a disaster. Though constantly harassed by hordes of furious peasants or swift-moving Cossacks, the French troops, worn out by privations of all sorts, made a determined stand outside the village of Malo-Jaroslawetz, which was situated on a slight eminence; six times was that little group of burning cottages lost and recaptured, but Eugène, who had to face eight of the enemy's divisions, at the last remained victorious. Napoleon was nearly taken prisoner by the Cossacks during this battle, which lasted from dawn until nightfall. Eugène's army fought against great odds with 20,000 French troops against 80,000 Russians; he himself escaped unhurt, but his horse was wounded under him. During one of the French army's fierce rushes over dead and dying to recapture the unfortunate village, General Delzons, the eldest of thirteen brothers, who had distinguished himself throughout the campaign by his bravery and endurance, fell mortally wounded by a Russian bullet. One of his numerous brothers, who was fighting by his side, crazy with grief, tried to recover the brave general's corpse from the enemy's hands, but he fell dead in the attempt. The sight of these two brave fellows lying side by side on the battle-field was too much for Eugène; spurring his tired horse, and yelling to his men to follow him —to death, if need be—he galloped up the eminence for the seventh and last time, and silenced the Russian guns.

Even Kutusoff had to confess that he had been beaten. After the battle Eugène went to his step-father and begged him to grant General Delzons' widow and four orphans a pension, and also to remember the brave fellow's brothers.

Many French, Italian and Russian troops perished in this battle, which may be called the turning-point in the Russian campaign, for it was the last victory of any consequence obtained by the Grand Army in Russia; three monuments were afterwards erected by the French, Italian and Russian nations on the spot where so many victims had been sacrificed to one man's ambition. Fearing lest Augusta should hear an exaggerated account of the danger to which he had been exposed, Eugène wrote to her:

"TURNECHEWO, *October 26th*, 1812.

"To-day I write to tell you that I am well, that the battle was productive of great glory to my corps, and that I also came in for a small share. We have been on the march since midday; it seems that we are nearing our winter quarters. We should have to penetrate far into Siberia if we wanted to catch those cursed Russians! We cannot expect to meet as soon as I had wished; but we may be allowed to hope that when we do meet we shall not have to part again. . . . I have not received your letters of September 28th, 29th and 30th. I hope our dear friends the Cossacks have not got hold of them. Adieu, I did not sleep much last night; I had been on horseback all day long. . . ."

When the Cossacks realized that the French army were retreating, they redoubled their attacks—they attacked by night and by day. The cold had become more intense. The horses, unable to get sufficient fodder, cropped the frozen grass as they moved along; and when even this expedient failed, they gave up the struggle and lay down to die on the trackless steppe. Broken carriages and baggage-waggons marked where the huge army had passed. And the army? . . . the Grand Army which had left France only a few months ago, with eagles proudly soaring above the silken standards, to an accompaniment of martial music and patriotic songs, was creeping homeward, a collection of half-naked, hollow-cheeked men and women and *children*, followed by a procession of creaking, jolting carts filled with wounded or dysentery-stricken soldiers wrapped in filthy, blood-stained rags, and huddled together like sheep in order to prevent themselves from being frozen to death. And ever and anon a motionless figure would be disentangled from the heaps of dying, hauled to the edge of the cart, and flung over the side to make room for some poor creature who had been limping along on a stick for hours, and counting the minutes until he would be allowed to take his place among the sick. And behind this piteous procession of sufferers came a black cloud of crows and vultures, the scavengers of the Grand Army, which would swoop down from time to time upon a heap of tattered garments lying with outstretched arms and sightless eyes among the ruts made by the lumbering waggons. And when the feathered scavengers had done their feast, those other scavengers—the rats—came to see what was left for them. Yet even then something still remained to show the work of the Master Hand ; the skull, with empty orbits, still gazed up into the grey dome of heaven, seeking to read the riddle of life, until the snow came and, with a mother's hand, spread her white coverlet, and hid, for a time at least, Fate's victim.

Several encounters took place ; at Viasma Eugène's corps lost heavily, and with great difficulty repulsed the enemy, who were trying to prevent the French troops reaching Smolensk. Eugène writes to his wife after the battle :

" BOLDIN, *November 6th*, 1812, 8 a.m.

" The Emperor was pleased with the behaviour of my corps during the last engagement ; the enemy have not worried us for forty-eight hours, and I think we shall soon be at the end of our campaign. We have suffered a good many privations during the last few days ; we are now marching along the route already traversed by the Grand Army. It is precisely in such moments of difficulty that we are enabled to see our fellow-creatures in their true colours, and I am glad of it. Adieu, my dear Augusta ; my health is good. I had a good wash yesterday, and I can assure you I wanted it ! I had not shaved for ten days, and I looked exactly like a Capuchin monk ! "

It was now 18 degrees below zero, and the cold increased the sufferings of the starving army. But neither cold nor privations could quell Eugène's courage. So bravely did he fight at the Battle of Borowsk that he earned the special praise of the Emperor. When the latter visited the scene of this battle he marvelled that his step-son had been able to oust the Russian troops from the excellent position occupied by them. Throughout this campaign, in short, Napoleon, confident that his step-son would second him, entrusted various difficult tasks to him, all of which were executed with precision and punctuality.

During the above-mentioned Battle of Borowsk Eugène found himself in great danger; having ventured with his troops too far from the main body of the army, he saw his men surrounded by the enemy. Had not Davout, who was commanding the outposts and was attacked at the same time, been able to extricate himself and fly to succour Eugène, it is probable that the whole division would have been annihilated.

Fortunately the intense cold dried the rain-drenched steppes and enabled the army to trudge along those rough tracks which in Russia are always either inches deep in dust or in mud, according to the time of the year.

In all his letters Eugène tries to hide from the anxious wife at home the terrible state in which the Grand Army now found itself. Writing from Duchowschtschina, November 11th, 1812, he tells her that his leg is swollen owing to fatigue, that he has had to abandon nearly all his baggage-waggons, and, what is more serious, a part of his artillery. He concludes with this remark : " Our misfortunes are great, *but we have not lost courage, and that is the main point.*"

On November 16th the French troops, on reaching Krasnoë, were again attacked by Kutusoff, and this time cruelly worsted. The retreat westward was now continued as quickly as possible ; but the progress of an army of footsore, heart-sick men, enfeebled by privations of all sorts, and jaded, starving steeds, is necessarily slow.

On November 23rd a terrible piece of news reached Eugène's corps : the bridges over the Beresina were in the enemy's possession. But the Beresina, a Styx for many thousand Frenchmen, had to be passed, bridges or no bridges, before the weary army could return to *la douce France.* November 26th saw the crossing of that river. A large portion of the Grand Army, unable to fight a way over the bridges, pursued by the indefatigable Cossacks, marched across the frozen river ; the ice broke under the weight of men, horses and guns, and many a brave son of France sank beneath the dark waters of the Beresina ; 20,000 Frenchmen perished that day. On reaching the other side many of the survivors were attacked by illness, and Eugène's entire staff was placed *hors de combat* for some days.

While at Molodeczino Napoleon, on December 2nd, gave Eugène orders to send all the wounded soldiers, the treasure and the baggage-waggons straight to Vilna, while he and the rest of the army followed slowly.

Smorghoni was reached by Napoleon and the *débris* of the Grand Army on December 3rd.

The Emperor had lately been receiving disquieting news from Paris; the conspiracy of General Malet,[1] a royalist agent who already, in 1808, had suffered imprisonment for an attempt to check Napoleon's successful career, had caused him a considerable amount of anxiety. General Malet, on learning of Napoleon's defeats in Russia, had managed, although shut up in a lunatic asylum, to forge, with the help of Generals Guidal[2] and Lahorie, a *senatus consultum*, in which he declared that the Bonaparte family had forfeited the throne, named a commission comprising five persons to govern France, and appointed himself Governor of Paris. Having escaped from the asylum during the night of October 23rd–24th, he went the round of the barracks in Paris, spreading reports to the effect that Napoleon had perished in the snows of Russia. So cleverly was this conspiracy carried out, that he and his fellow-conspirators were within an inch of success. However, General Hulin,[3] a faithful supporter of Napoleon, who was then at the head of the troops quartered in the capital, and who did not wish to lose his berth, arrested Malet; while doing so his jaw was shattered by a pistol-shot fired by his prisoner.

Malet and fifteen other conspirators were executed on October 29th.

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[1] *Malet*, Claude François (1754–1812): fought bravely under the Republican flag, was made Governor of Paris by Masséna in 1805. Having joined the Royalists in 1812, he forfeited his life in consequence of the failure of the above-named plot.

[2] *Guidal*, Maximilien-Joseph (1755–1812): a native of Grasse; he entered the army, was made brigadier-general, and then, having participated in Malet's conspiracy, was arrested and shot with the other persons implicated in the affair.

[3] *Hulin*, Pierre-Auguste (1758–1841): the son of a dealer in old clothes, first came into public notice by his efforts to save Delaunay, the Governor of the Bastille. He seconded Bonaparte on many important occasions. He was exiled from France on the return of the Bourbons, but was permitted to return some years before his death.

And now we come to the act for which Napoleon has been more blamed—and more justly blamed—than any in his long career.

On reaching Smorghoni, Napoleon immediately summoned his marshals and commanders to his side, and, after a long discourse in which he informed them that his presence was required in Paris on account of grave political events, gave command of the remnant of the Grand Army into the hands of Murat.

Cut to the heart by this desertion—was not the Malet conspiracy already a thing of the past ?—Eugène wrote to his step-father begging him to allow him to resign his command.

"SMORGHONI, *December 5th*, 1812.

"Sire—It is not my duty to judge Your Majesty's conduct; but if, as it seems likely, Your Majesty is about to accede to the nation's wishes and return home, leaving the King of Naples at the head of affairs, I will take the liberty to beg you to give me yet another proof of your goodwill towards me. . . . Sire, I have devoted my life to Your Majesty. I therefore venture to hope that you will allow me to return to Italy as soon as convenient to you. If Your Majesty, however, wishes me to stay with the army, I will remain at my post as long as it pleases you, and I will continue to serve you with the same zeal and devotion as heretofore."

But Napoleon would not hear of his step-son returning to Italy ; for, although the viceroy's corps of 40,000 troops had now dwindled to a mere handful, the moral example set by its courageous commander was not to be despised. It has been said in Napoleon's excuse that his return to France was caused by the necessity of finding more troops to take the place of the dead. But surely his presence was more necessary in Russia ? Who else possessed, in such a superlative degree, the talent for conquering, holding his own, and retreating, alas! as the erstwhile General Bonaparte ?

Before night had fallen Napoleon had jumped into a sledge, and was being rapidly borne away from the scenes of horror which his ambition had caused. On the morrow Eugène, sick at heart with painful misgivings as to the future, but obedient to his Emperor's commands, moved on towards Vilna ; he writes from a bivouac near Ochmiana :

"*December* 6*th*, 1812.

"Good evening, my dear Augusta. I am well, notwithstanding the excessive cold—18 degrees below zero, I believe. You have probably heard that the Emperor has left the army in order to return to Paris. We may be sure that his presence there is necessary. We are all remaining at our posts. However, I hope if nothing happens this winter, that I shall be able to come and pay you a visit. I long to do so for more than one reason. . . . But it would be very wrong of me to leave just now, for, come what may, we must remain at our posts. Adieu, my dearest Augusta. I shall be at Vilna the day after to-morrow; I will then send Allemagne[1] to you. The poor devil is worn out; I really thought to-day that he was frozen from head to foot."

The Grand Army, bereft of its Emperor, fell into a state of depression impossible to describe. The soldiers trudged along in the snow and sleet, with heads bent, neither looking to the right or to the left, like a flock of sheep going to slaughter; so miserable, so benumbed by the cold, so hardened by suffering had they become, that they hardly noticed when any of their comrades, overcome by hunger and sickness, dropped out of the ranks. It is true that one still saw the strong helping the weak, a one-armed man supporting his lame comrade, or a half-blind veteran carrying his weaker brother on his shoulders; but such cases were getting fewer and fewer. Lucky were those who were considered strong enough to bear a journey; they were not all so fortunate. Vilna was reached on December 8th, from whence Eugène wrote to his wife, telling her that he cannot send her any New Year's gifts this year, for he has lost all his carriages and draught-horses, and then he adds that he has been obliged to leave behind him at least twenty domestics who were too ill to continue the journey.

Even in Vilna Eugène failed to find the rest for which he and his troops longed so ardently. Hardly had the French troops entered the town when the Russians appeared in sight. Murat, unwilling to face a siege, made off, leaving Eugène and Ney to brave the enemy. Unfortunately, many of the French soldiers, rendered desperate by weeks and months of semi-starvation and unparalleled sufferings, became intoxicated, and began to pillage the town. Mustering such troops as would obey them—about 600—Ney and Eugène endeavoured to hold Vilna. A few hours soon showed them that they would have to continue the weary march westward. During the night of December 9th–10th the two commanders marched their troops out of Vilna and began to move in the direction of Kowno. With 25 degrees of frost, incessantly harassed by Cossacks, obliged to abandon several of their number in Vilna — one shudders to think what their fate was !—the Grand Army reached Kowno on December 12th, close to which town Eugène found his aide-de-camp, Allemagne, wandering about, having not only lost his way but his horse, his orderly and his despatches ; he was half-perished with the cold into the bargain. An army of sledges covered with sick and dying, including Eugène's aide-de-camp Bataille and his mameluke Pétrus, followed the forlorn soldiers. Eugène tells his wife in another fortnight he will be "the only person left to tell the tale."

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[1] One of Eugène's aides-de-camp.

At Kowno Eugène and the different marshals held a meeting, when it was decided that the former was to take his troops to Marienwerder. In obedience to orders, Eugène now retreated to Wirballen, from whence he writes to Augusta:

"WIRBALLEN, *December* 15*th*, 1812.

"We are now on the frontier of Poland and Prussia ; it seems that we are to take up our winter quarters on the banks of the Vistula. We are in the greatest need of rest. The enemy followed us in considerable numbers as far as Vilna. From Vilna to Kowno we only had to endure attacks from the cavalry and artillery. I hope that the enemy will soon get tired of pursuing us, and that they will not cross the Niemen in very great numbers. I was obliged to leave poor Pétrus at Kowno ; he was too ill to travel. I much fear that I shall lose him. I begged the people at my lodgings to take care of him, and I left some money for him. . . . I am fairly well, notwithstanding my anxiety and fatigue. . . ."

What became of poor Pétrus ? Too humble to be noticed, History is silent concerning his fate.

In another letter Eugène tries to take his troubles lightly, for he tells Augusta to warn her ladies that when their friends return to Italy, they will find that these brave sons of Mars have lost their noses and ears in Russia—" for everything freezes here ! "

But he strikes a tragic note when he unbosoms himself to his private secretary, Baron Darnay, in this letter which brings so vividly to our eyes the spectacle of the sufferings of his troops :

" I am sending Fortis[1] to Milan. Question him well, my dear Darnay, and he will tell you what we have gone through during the last two months. The climate has been the ruin of us. Our beautiful Grand Army no longer exists ! Our losses are enormous. The sight we see every day is heart-rending. Our friends, our comrades, fall dead of hunger, cold and fatigue by the roadside. Joubert[2] died three days ago. The Italians die like flies. The royal guard was not even able to save 200 men. Those who get home alive may think themselves very lucky ; that is all I myself care about. Glory no longer has any charms for me : it is too costly. Adieu."

On reaching Marienwerder Eugène set himself the painful task of counting his losses ; the result was appalling. Of the 2000 troops still remaining to him, half of that number were too weak to hold their guns, crippled, maimed for life.

He was able to rest for a fortnight at Marienwerder, and while here he received from Augusta a welcome gift of warm clothes for his troops. In his letter of thanks he regrets that he is not with her on Christmas Eve to distribute the presents which always accompany this fête in the land of fir-trees.

The dawn of the year 1813 saw no change in Eugène's position, except that Prussia, well aware of Russia's success, was beginning to show signs of rebellion.

At Murat's command, Eugène now moved on to Posen, at the same time sending 500 troops to protect the town of Thorn. No sooner did he leave Marienwerder than the Cossacks recommenced their attacks. However, on this occasion the French troops were better able to repulse them—probably owing to their fortnight's rest—and they chased the Russians over the frozen Vistula, killed many of their number and captured several horses.

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[1] One of Eugène's aides-de-camp.

[2] A relative of the celebrated General Joubert who perished in the Battle of Novi, 1799.

Eugène entered Posen January 17th. Here he was greeted by a piece of news for which he was by no means unprepared. Murat, imitating his Imperial master, announced his intention of returning to Naples in order to see after his interests, which, although only a humble King, he declared were at stake, and of giving over the command of the remnant of the Grand Army to the viceroy. Ah! well might Napoleon say that everything went wrong when he was not on the spot. Everybody was indignant, but—the rats were beginning to leave the sinking ship in earnest.

One by one Napoleon's marshals, officers of high and low rank, began to slink back to France.

At first Eugène refused to accept the post of commander-in-chief from Murat, whom he had always mistrusted; he was still so diffident, so distrustful of his own powers. But when it was represented to him that he was the only lieutenant of the Emperor now in Prussia, he accepted the task of trying to retreat with honour to himself and the Grand Army. He wrote to Augusta on the same day:

"Posen, *January 17th*, 1813.

"My dear Augusta—I have to announce to you a most astounding piece of news; on leaving Marienwerder I received orders from King Murat telling me to travel post and join him in Posen. Hardly had I arrived when I heard that he was about to abandon the army. He is ill and does not wish to keep his command; he is even starting without waiting to learn the Emperor's wishes. He wanted to give me command of the army, but I did not wish to accept the post from his hands; as he persisted in his intention of going off, I took command of the army for a time, difficult task though it may be, in order to give the Emperor a last proof of my devotion. Everything has been left in the greatest confusion, and I assure you, my good Augusta, that I have a terrible task before me. I cannot hope to carry it through with glory to myself, but at least I have got the courage to undertake it, and I shall certainly not relinquish it now I have once begun. Adieu, my dear Augusta. What grieves me most is to think that I shall not be able to write to you so often, for my time will be fully occupied."

In a letter to the Emperor bearing the same date he says:

"Sire—I have the honour to inform Your Majesty that the King left the army at four o'clock this morning. Last night the Prince de Neufchâtel (Berthier) and I did our very best to persuade him to remain. As no marshal of the Empire is here, and as I am Your Majesty's only lieutenant, I have taken command of the army for the time being, until Your Majesty has the kindness to appoint a commander-in-chief. I am going to endeavour to gather a few thousand men round me in order to establish communications with Warsaw. I much regret that I have not got 20,000 men at my disposal, because I am convinced that if I could strengthen my right wing and group my forces round Warsaw, the enemy would postpone any serious attack. Unfortunately no properly organized troops exist at the present moment. . . ."

Napoleon did not keep his step-son waiting for his consent:

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *January 22nd*, 1813.

"My Son—Take command of the Grand Army. *I am sorry I did not give it to you on my departure.* I flatter myself that, had I done so, you would have retreated less precipitately, and I should not have suffered such huge losses. However, it is no good crying over spilt milk. You must write me full particulars every day. . . ."

CHAPTER XI

Eugène begins his difficult task—He saves the life of his orderly at the Battle of Möckern—The Battle of Lützen—Eugène receives orders to return to Italy in order to raise more troops—Austria declares war—Wholesale desertion of Italian and Croatian soldiers—Eugène's father-in-law tries to persuade him to betray the Emperor's confidence—The Emperor receives false reports of Eugène's behaviour—A mysterious interview—Eugène is offered a very valuable bribe—The King of Bavaria is discomfited.

EUGÈNE immediately put his shoulder to the wheel and began his huge task of reorganizing the Grand Army. More than one of Napoleon's generals speaks of the viceroy's wonderful talent for making his troops obey him. But he now found himself face to face with a task before which the Emperor himself had recoiled, and which had caused Murat to remember that, although only a humble king, he must attend to his own interests before all things. King Murat was a clever and a discerning person.

In the letters written by Eugène to Augusta during the months of January and February, 1813, he deplores the scarcity of troops, repeats over and over again that he is fearfully busy, that he is up to his neck in work, that he finds that everything has been left in the greatest confusion, and that the only thing which enables him to continue his task is the thought that the Emperor will be pleased with his efforts.

Years after Napoleon, in speaking of this campaign, did justice to Eugène when he said :

" We all made mistakes ; Eugène was the only one of our number who never made any."

And General Armand says even more :

" The fifty days' campaign from Posen to Leipsic was the most extraordinary during the Russian campaign." And he adds that : " All authorities in military matters agree that this marvel of strategy would alone suffice to place Prince Eugène among the greatest generals mentioned in history."

It was about this time that Augusta's health began to give way under the strain of anxiety, and she wrote to Napoleon begging him to restore her husband to her. But it was clearly Eugène's duty to remain at his post. How could he belie the motto he had adopted on accepting the duties of viceroy: *Honour and Fidelity?* Because Napoleon's disasters were being reflected in his family's conduct, Eugène saw no reason why he should follow their example, and he says as much in his next letter to Augusta:

"Posen, *January 28th,* 1813.

"... I found everything upside down. Lately nobody has thought of anything but trying to save himself, and nobody even knows where to find the necessary troops. I shall consider that I have done something if I can manage to restore calm among my men and make them work together. I hope that people will not say that I took the command to gratify my own ambition, *for I did so for the Emperor's sake;* it would be impossible to find a more difficult task. Find out for me if it is true that the king (Murat) has passed through Milan on his way to Naples, for he told us that he was going to stay with the King of Westphalia (Jérôme) and rest awhile: an invalid would find it rather a long journey to travel straight to Naples without stopping anywhere on the way. We must confess that the Emperor is very badly treated by his own family. I hope that this little incident will open his eyes. . . . I work very hard, but I do it gladly, if, by so doing, I can show the Emperor who are his best friends. We have not moved yet; but I dare not hope for any success, and I much fear that the enemy will force us to beat a retreat across the Oder, and then the Russians will occupy the whole of unfortunate Poland.

"P.S.—Poor Michael's son died the day before yesterday; I am very sorry, for he was a good servant."

Eugène now had 17,000 troops at his command; but what could 17,000 troops do against millions? Napoleon sent him letter after letter of advice how to defend Poland, but advice was of little good when there were not enough troops to carry out his orders.

On February 2nd Eugène had a very painful duty to perform; he had to tell the Emperor that Ney, although openly condemning Murat's conduct, had, after much grumbling and hesitation, imitated his example and thrown up his post. In this letter Eugène tells his step-father that words cannot express the state of despondency into which the Grand Army, abandoned by nearly all its generals, has sunk since leaving Vilna. Persuasion and threats are equally effectless. And yet Eugène had been able to keep his position in Posen for eighteen days. But on February 12th several thousand Russian troops appeared in sight, and all communication with the Emperor was cut off. Eugène was now forced, much against his will, to move nearer Berlin. While doing so, he lost his servant Janois, to whom he was much attached. Poor Janois, having ventured too far from the army, was captured by some Russian soldiers and probably cut to pieces. But Eugène's grief for this loss was soon forgotten in a more widespread disaster; for we find that, notwithstanding Napoleon's assertion that Eugène had never made any mistakes, he now made a very serious miscalculation when some of his Lithuanian troops were surprised and captured by a band of Cossacks. Napoleon was furious on learning of this defeat.

On February 20th Eugène, still harassed by the Cossacks, but hoping to be able to remain in Berlin until reinforcements from France and Italy would enable him to return the Russians' attack, now entered that town, where he learnt that Frederick William III had concluded a secret treaty with Russia, and had already gone to Breslau. From Berlin he writes to the Emperor:

"*February 22nd*, 1813.

"... The enemy have advanced up to the very walls of Berlin. The day before yesterday about 80 Cossacks managed to get into the city and alarm everybody. The duc de Castiglione[1] (Augereau), by mustering his garrison and placing his guns pointing down the different avenues, obliged the enemy to beat a retreat. The Russians then retired to Charlottenburg, from whence they spread over the country in bands of 25 or 40 men. The excellent conduct of the inhabitants of Berlin helped to re-establish order. The populace was very excited; it set upon any isolated officers and soldiers, and gave them a good drubbing. Having learnt this news at Furstenwald, and knowing that Marshal Augereau had no cavalry to drive the Cossacks away, I started this morning with the cavalry belonging to the guard, and by riding hard we managed to get here before four o'clock. The enemy, having learnt of our arrival, were careful to keep out of our way; in fact, we only saw a few Cossacks in the distance. I shall take care that my cavalry are ready to chase them quite away from the town before daybreak to-morrow."

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[1] *Augereau*, Pierre François Charles (1757–1816): was born of humble parents, entered the army and soon distinguished himself by his talents. After having served Bonaparte faithfully and earned various titles and honours for himself, he betrayed the Emperor's confidence and offered his services to Louis XVIII, who wisely refused them.

The Emperor, on learning of the disastrous effects of Eugène's miscalculation, sent an angry letter, of which we find an echo in the following letter from the viceroy:

"*March* 15*th*, 1813.

"Sire—I can see only too well from the last letters which I have received from Your Majesty that you approve of none of my plans concerning a march towards the Elbe, and I fear that you will not approve of the position which I considered it was my duty to take up on the banks of that river. Obliged by recent events to act immediately, I, although in dire need of Your Majesty's advice, did what I thought best. I considered I was sufficiently prudent, and that I could not go very far wrong if I listened to the dictates of my conscience. However, zeal is of but little use when such great interests are at stake; skill and talent are then necessary, and perhaps, notwithstanding all my efforts, the task is too difficult for me. So if Your Majesty thinks, as all your letters give me reason to suppose, that I am not capable of executing your commands, I beg you not to leave me any longer in a position where I displease you, and I entreat you to let somebody else take my place as commander of the army; and, as I wish above all things to serve my country at this moment, I beg Your Majesty to give me command of some division where I can prove to you my zeal and my undying affection."

But Napoleon knew too well that officers such as Eugène were difficult to find, and especially at that time, when everybody of note or ambition wanted to be in Paris to watch what was going to happen. His next letter was less severe.

The Emperor's appeal to the Senate for more money, more ammunition, and, above all, more troops, was heard and answered by the country. Yet a few more weeks and the second Grand Army was to sally forth from Lutèce with bands playing and flags flying.

Meanwhile Eugène received orders to concentrate his troops round Magdeburg ; but before making his junction with the second Grand Army, Eugène was to see another battle, namely, the Battle of Möckern, which was to the advantage of the Russians, an advantage which they did not follow up. It was on this occasion that Eugène saved the life of his Polish orderly, who, when carrying a portfolio full of important despatches, was set upon by some Cossacks, and would have been taken prisoner if Eugène, heedless of danger, had not galloped up, and, discharging his pistol right and left, forced his assailants to release their prize. The portfolio was picked up pierced through and through by the Cossacks' lances. This memento of a glorious deed was treasured by Augusta until the day of her death. Colonel Kliski, the viceroy's orderly, never forgot his benefactor ; and, as long as Eugène lived, he always received a birthday letter of gratitude and good wishes from his grateful orderly.

Eugène's health was beginning to show signs of failing ; he speaks in his letters to his wife of loss of voice, of bronchitis and lumbago, and other ills which he, being unable to lie up, took some time to cure. In one letter he says : " I have felt very tired these last few days. When dismounting from my horse yesterday I found I could hardly stand on my feet. . . . I shall soon get better when I have you to take care of me."

We now find a letter from Napoleon written from Trianon, where he was spending a few days with his wife and the little King of Rome, preparatory to setting forth in order to try and regain lost ground.

" TRIANON, *March 18th,* 1813.

" My Son—I have received your letter of the 14th inst. *You must not keep any artillery*[1] among the guards now with you ; all the artillery must march upon Frankfort. So if you still have any with you at the present moment, you must send them to join their comrades. Wittenberg must be protected. However, I do not think that 3000 troops are necessary to do so ; from 1500 to 2000 ought to suffice. I have already told you what sort of troops you ought to employ. They must have provisions for three months, and you must have enough water to fill the moats with six feet of water. The fortress ought to be able to protect itself. Give orders that pieces of ordnance be placed in front of the bridge, that another smaller bridge be constructed with palisades on the left bank, and that it be protected by four guns, so that the enemy, if they cross the river, may not be able to burn it. Have a *blockaus* (*sic*) constructed. Four or five small bridges have been built over the inundated district. These you must hold at all costs, so that the sentinels may not be surprised and captured by the Cossacks. General Bourcier writes to me, but tells me nothing in his letters. I understand that he has 5000 men and 5000 horses at Hanover, and that he cannot make use of these troops because they neither have arms nor equipments.

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[1] The sentences *in italics* in the above letter were added in Napoleon's own handwriting.

" Yesterday I sent you an account of what the War Office has in use at the present time, and what is now at Magdeburg. I understand that you have distributed 40 francs to each of your men, with which to fit themselves out. Your letters tell me nothing. I must have some details, and then I shall know better what I have to send you. Many things can be purchased with paper money in the markets ; it is just as good as specie. However, the War Office has probably sent money to Magdeburg.

" The enemy's cavalry will not dare to advance towards Hamburg if you have taken up an offensive position on the right bank, for fear lest they should be cut off from the main body of troops.

" You told me in one of your letters that an epidemic was raging among the Saxon troops. It is most important that General Gérard[1] should not allow his men to mix with the Saxons. *This is most important.*"

On April 15th Napoleon left Saint-Cloud. He reached Mayence on the 16th, and crossed the Oder with his second Grand Army. Friberg was entered on April 22nd. At his step-father's orders Eugène now moved on towards Leipsic. Napoleon reached Erfurt April 26th.

On May 1st the Battle of Weissenfels was fought by Eugène and the remnant of the first Grand Army ; the battle was productive of a great loss to France, for Bessières, one of

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[1] *Gérard*, Etienne-Maurice (1773–1852): first served in Italy under Bernadotte, then fought at Wagram, where he was wounded. When under the orders of General Grouchy at Waterloo, he in vain tried to persuade that general that Napoleon was in need of his assistance. He was wounded the same day at Wavres. On retiring from the army he was elected a Deputy ; he was universally respected and received many honours before his death.

Napoleon's best generals, was killed on this occasion. On the evening after this encounter Eugène made his junction with the Emperor at Lützen, where a great battle was to be fought on the morrow. Eugène writes to his wife on the eve of the Battle of Lützen :

" From the Camp outside Lutzen, *May 2nd*, 1813, 5 a.m.

" . . . I met the Emperor at four o'clock last night. We had a little encounter with the enemy yesterday which was without any important results except that poor Marshal Bessières was killed by a bullet. I had not a single man wounded among all my troops ; we took several prisoners. There is one remarkable fact, and that is that we made our junction with the Grand Army on the anniversary of one of Gustavus-Adolphus'[1] battles. Adieu, my good Augusta. The Emperor received me very kindly."

The last sentence in Eugène's letter contains a world of meaning ; the Emperor still possessed his soldiers' love and esteem. One kind word from him who was rather proud of asserting that he had risen from the *canaille* (although we doubt very much whether Charles Marie Buonaparte, assessor at the good town at Ajaccio and husband of that excellent woman Letizia Ramolino, would have liked to have been told that he belonged to the *canaille*) could bring tears of gratitude to the eyes of the most weather-beaten veteran. A touching anecdote is related of how the Emperor was one day distributing honours to several well-deserving soldiers who had spent the best years of their lives in his service. One old veteran, not understanding that the coveted cross of the Légion d'honneur went with the title he was to receive, loudly expressed his indignation at being " left out in the cold." His neighbours tried in vain to quiet him. The Emperor, disturbed by a continual muttering and grumbling coming from the rows of warriors drawn up in front of him, inquired rather sharply : " Well, what's the matter ? "

" What's the matter ? " retorted a tall, gaunt figure, blind of one eye, his face so covered with scars that it looked like a chessboard, trembling and almost speechless with indignation, limping on one leg as he stepped forth from the ranks, but still saluting his Emperor. " What's the matter, d'ye say? What do I care for your d—d titles? Keep 'em for others. Look, look at these scars! Here's Marengo! Auerstadt! Jena! Eylau! Friedland! Wagram! . . ." (He might have added, "And there's room for more!")

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[1] *Gustavus-Adolphus,* King of Sweden (1594–1632) : son and successor of Charles X, was killed at the Battle of Lützen which he won over the Austrians.

A tear of wounded pride rolled down the bronzed cheek of this modern Cyclops.

"*Ah! mon enfant!*" cried the Emperor, folding the aggrieved *grognard* in his arms, at the same time pinning the coveted decoration on the shabby, blood-stained coat.

The Battle of Lützen, fought on May 2nd, was a brilliant success for the Grand Army, notwithstanding the fact that the two sovereigns of Prussia and Russia, although forced to retreat hastily from the battle-field, loudly declared that they had been successful all along the line. Eugène writes:

"FROM A BIVOUAC NEAR TORGAU, *May 3rd*, 1813.

"We fought a splendid battle yesterday, my good Augusta; and just as I anticipated, it was entirely in our favour. The Russian and Prussian armies attacked our right wing while I was marching towards Leipsic. We immediately returned the attack, and so beat them, notwithstanding their superior cavalry. The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia were present. We killed and wounded many."

The next week saw almost daily battles, and always with success to the Grand Army.

However, on May 8th Eugène received commands from the Emperor to return to Italy—not to rest, that was out of the question, but to raise another army by conscription, and thus enable the Emperor to continue his punishment of Prussia and Russia. Good luck seemed about to return to France.

On May 12th Eugène left Dresden, whither he had gone with the Grand Army on May 8th, and started for Italy. He travelled via Munich, where he had a long interview with his father-in-law, "a satisfactory interview," he tells his step-father; "for the King of Bavaria is not likely to abandon you——" no, not as long as the Emperor was successful.

Eugène's return was saddened by fears for the future. He pursued with feverish haste his task of raising troops—not to aid the Emperor, however, but to protect Italy from Austria's invasion. He was also much distressed by news from Naples, where Junot, who for some years had been showing signs of insanity, caused probably by wounds in his head received in battle, was bringing ridicule upon himself and his compatriots by his mad escapades. Already, on being made Governor of Paris, he had assumed such an absurd air of importance that the Emperor had given him the nickname of *Monsieur le marquis*. Poor Junot was one of Napoleon's truest friends; the mere thought of losing his Emperor's affection would cause him to cry like a child. The Bonapartes' *folie des grandeurs* must have been contagious; the duc d'Abrantès' insanity seems to have manifested itself in the same form. However, he had other and less harmless whims, one of which consisted of shooting at his fellow-citizens as if they were so many rabbits. He was also fond of appearing in public in the costume of our first parents. On one occasion he insisted upon perching himself, attired in a night-cap and nothing else, on the box of a stage-coach. But his last act of folly had been to write two incoherent letters, one to the admiral of the English fleet cruising in the Adriatic and the other, which we will now reproduce, to the viceroy of Italy:

"I appoint you king of all the country from the Adige to Cattaro. I give you all the territory owned by the Turks in Bosnia, in —— (illegible) as far as the Bosphorus of Thrace. I give you one island in the Adriatic, one in the Black Sea, one in the Red Sea, one in the Mediterranean, one in the Atlantic Ocean and one in the Indies. Sixteen shares in the gold, silver and diamond mines are to be distributed in the following manner: to His Majesty, the great Napoleon, I give four ——, to His Imperial Highness the viceroy, whom I make emperor or whatever Napoleon likes, two ——; to the Prince of Neufchâtel, whom I make Emperor of Austria, half a share ——; to the kings of the Confederation whom Napoleon will make, as he likes, either emperors of Spain or kings, to the King of Naples, to the King of Holland, to the King of Westphalia, to the king (*sic*), and to all the kings whom the Emperor shall make, four shares—to the English half a share, and to myself half a share, to govern Brazil, Portugal, half of North America, while the English will receive the other half, the South Sea, the Indies and China, if the Emperor wishes. We will take possession of everything and we will be crowned in the midst of ten million soldiers, all friends, in the middle of Pekin; and all this shall come about before another ten years have elapsed. I will tell you all the details of the details when I see you."

Napoleon naturally wished to put a stop to this sad state of affairs, and he wrote to Eugène :

"Dresden, *July 8th*, 1813.

"My Son—I am surprised that after all the duc d'Abrantès has done you have not sent him back to France. I can only express my displeasure that you have not put a stop to such a distressing spectacle for our compatriots abroad. Send him away without more delay, and, as he cannot go to Paris, as he is too well known there, he must be taken to his father's place near Dijon. Write to the War Office that his wife may go and meet him and take charge of him."

On July 22nd Junot returned to the humble home at Montbard, which he had left so many years ago in order to follow the tricolour flag. He was placed in the little room in which he was born ; and it is said that during the brief moments of lucidity which preceded his death only seven days after his return, he recognized the faces and objects which he had known and loved in his childhood.

Eugène's army numbered 50,574 infantry and 1800 cavalry troops, many of whom, however, came from Croatia and Dalmatia, and were of an inferior stamp to those of the Grand Army and the *armée d'Italie*. Eugène was aware of this fact, and he dreaded lest his new army should prove less valorous than the first.

On July 17th Eugène set his army in motion, not too soon, either, for Austrian agents were hard at work in Croatia and Illyria preaching the wholesale desertion which was to follow the declaration of war. Before setting off, however, he and his wife paid a short visit to Venice, where she remained and was fêted by the Venetians, while he went to inspect several strongholds in the environs. Having escorted Augusta back to Milan, Eugène bade farewell to her and started for Udine on August 8th.

During a brief truce with the Allies, Napoleon had been able to rally his army, which had been much strengthened by the arrival of some picked cavalry troops from Spain. But now Austria put an end to the truce by saying that, if by August 11th, Napoleon did not consent to Metternich's terms, she would join forces with Russia and Prussia and make him do so.

Napoleon replied to Austria's ultimatum by again taking the offensive from Dresden, where he had established his head-quarters, and where a great battle was about to be fought. He directed a series of operations against his trio of foes. At first he was successful. Austria's ultimatum and consequent behaviour quite prevented Eugène rejoining the Emperor ; in future he had to do his best to protect the kingdom confided to his charge. He was destined to experience trouble at the very outset of his operations. His young, inexperienced and only half-trained Croatian troops, rendered deaf to their commander's behests by Austria's repeated assurances that they would soon be rid of their French master, deserted together with many a child of sunny Italy, and fled back to their homes or, what was worse, preached open rebellion, and thus did even more harm. Eugène was obliged at last to issue a proclamation in which he stated that all deserters from the *armée d'Italie* would be considered as enemies and shot.

On August 19th the Austrians crossed the Save near Agram. Laybach and Villach quickly gave in to their former master. However, Eugène's prompt behaviour enabled him to recover the latter town—but not for long. Austria was less successful at Rossek and Federaun, while the brilliant victory of Feistritz, chiefly due to the *furia francese* of some newly arrived French conscripts and also, perhaps, to the news of Napoleon's success at Dresden,[1] caused the viceroy to write the following welcome letter to his step-father :

"KRAINBURG, *September 7th*, 1813.

" . . . We attacked the enemy at three o'clock in the afternoon. The engagement was warm and success was ours from the very beginning. The enemy's retrenchments were carried with cries of ' Long life to the Emperor ! ' We pursued the enemy for two leagues. The enemy's three battalions of grenadiers had no time to deploy. The foremost battalion alone had time to discharge their guns. Our young soldiers did not even deign to reply, but flung themselves upon the enemy with fixed bayonets. Night and the terrible weather prevented us pursuing them any further. . . . This day's work, which cost the enemy 400 killed and wounded, did the greatest honour to the officers, generals and troops concerned in it. We took 350 prisoners. Our young soldiers fought as bravely as any of the veterans."

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[1] The Battle of Dresden, when Napoleon defeated his three enemies, was fought August 26th–27th, 1813.

Eugène's troops won several other small victories during the next few days, including the Battle of Saint Marein, when he captured 400 prisoners.

But we find the following ominous sentence in a letter written to Augusta, dated October 4th, from Santa Croce : " I hope that His Majesty will soon conclude a peace, for, if this war continues,we can hope for nothing but misfortunes."

All thoughts of joining the Emperor and of being of use to him with his new army now vanished for ever from Eugène's heart. From Gradisca—for retreat had become a necessity—he writes to Augusta the following letter, in which he tries to make her believe that he can still be cheerful :

" GRADISCA, *October 11th*, 1813.

" . . . I had quite forgotten to tell you that I had sent Bataille to Milan, so you will probably see him before you get this letter. I really think he would have given up the ghost if I had detained him any longer ; he was in such a hurry to get married that he could not sleep ! I felt all the more inclined to pity him because his last wound prevented him getting on his horse. I hope that he will find the happiness which he seems in such a hurry to enjoy. *But marriage is a lottery, and it is not everybody who is as lucky as I have been, and can win the first prize.* There ! that's a little secret for you ! . . ."

Yet Eugène's heart must have been very heavy when he wrote the above letter, for he had just received a horrible piece of news : his father-in-law, now firmly convinced that although Napoleon might still be successful, that success could not last much longer—how could one man hope to vanquish three foes ?—was thinking about going over to the enemy's camp, and thus hastening the downfall of his son-in-law's benefactor. Here is the letter :

" NYMPHENBURG, *October 8th*, 1813.

" My beloved Son—You, better than anybody else, know with what scrupulous exactitude I have always fulfilled my

(Photo: Stuffler, Munich)

QUEEN CAROLINE, WIFE OF MAXIMILIAN-JOSEPH OF BAVARIA

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promises to France, no matter what it has cost me to do so. The disasters of the last campaign, my dearest friend, have surpassed our worst fears ; nevertheless Bavaria has managed to raise a fresh army under the command of the Prince von Reuss,[1] with which she has hitherto been able to hold the Austrian army in check. This army protects part of my frontier, but leaves Bohemia from Passau to Egra, as well as the frontier of Franconia towards Saxony, unprotected. I have been hourly expecting somebody to come to the rescue of this huge piece of unprotected territory, but I have been disappointed. The neighbouring princes, including the King of Würtemberg, have refused to help me, pleading as their excuse that they want their troops to protect their own possessions. . . . The enemy's troops have been permitted to occupy the whole country from the Saal to the Elbe, to destroy several French corps and to threaten my frontiers. . . . It is probable that I shall be forced to fly together with my whole family. In such a critical and wellnigh hopeless position, the only course left open to me was to listen to the advice of the allied sovereigns and conclude a treaty with them. It seemed to me on this occasion (and I think I am quite justified in telling you) that the Austrians might possibly conclude an armistice with Italy. I tell you this as a father and not as a king, for I am convinced that you will know how to serve your own interests and at the same time, by fulfilling your various duties, preserve your honour intact. . . .

" I hope, my dear Eugène, that we shall still keep good friends, and perhaps I shall be able to prove to you *by deeds* that my affection for you has suffered no change ; it will last as long as I live.

" I embrace you a thousand times ; the queen embraces you."

Before replying to this invitation to prove a traitor, Eugène issued a proclamation to his troops (an indirect reply we may almost call it), at the same time ordering 15,000 conscripts to join the army immediately. In his proclamation Eugène reminded the Italian nation that Austria had always tried to foment troubles among the different States, that she was jealous of Italy's prosperity, and that she was now about to attempt to regain what she had lost. He then pointed out to them the progress they had made during the last twelve years, and ended by beseeching them to fight for the Emperor who had raised them from the dust and given them the most noble and most valuable institutions.

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[1] The house of Reuss is descended from Heinrich, count of Gleitsberg. The head of the eldest branch of the family received the title of prince in 1778.

Having done his best to protect the country entrusted to his charge, Eugène wrote to his father-in-law telling him that not only had his letter pained him beyond words, but it had made him tremble for his beloved wife's fate.

" You know me well enough," he writes, " to realize that nothing can tempt me to leave the path of duty. I know that, by behaving thus, I am certain to find in you a true father and friend to myself, my dear Augusta and your grandchildren. If Fortune is as unkind to me in future as she has hitherto been kind, I shall regret to my last day that I have not been able to make Augusta and her children as happy as I should have liked to have made them ; but my conscience will still be clear, and I shall leave the heritage of a spotless name to my children." He concludes with begging the King of Bavaria not to forget his daughter and his grandchildren.

And now he had to tell Augusta of her father's proposal ; it was a difficult and a painful task, not the least painful among all the difficult tasks he had to accomplish. He hints to her that he will now have to face another enemy, and that the idea is not very pleasant, notwithstanding the fact that his enemies will have to be twice as strong as they now are if they want to drive him out of the country. He also says that he dreads what may happen in the Tyrol. After begging her to write to her father and try whether she can make him realize what a despicably mean thing he has done, he ends with these words : " It is a sad thing to see you, my good Augusta, *obliged to forget that you are a Bavarian by birth.*"

But Augusta's father had no intention of allowing her to forget that fact. We may suppose that, notwithstanding his cruel behaviour in forcing her to accept Eugène as a husband —luckily she never regretted it—he really loved his daughter. It is also probable that he felt a little ashamed of his ingratitude towards Napoleon, for, instead of writing directly to his daughter, he wrote to the Baroness von Wurmbs, Augusta's governess, who had accompanied her to Italy after her marriage, assuring her that he would neither forget her nor her husband.

Augusta was thoroughly indignant at the covert hints contained in her father's letter to Eugène. With what sorrow did she not reply, saying that "she refused to influence her husband in any way, that she would forget that she was a Bavarian by birth, and would only remember that she had the sweetest of children and the best and most beloved of husbands!"

Eugène was deeply moved when he heard what she had done. Although he regretted that she had not tried to influence her father for good, he could but approve of her letter, and assure her that, no matter what might happen, he would prove to her that he was proud to be her husband.

Again the King of Bavaria tried to persuade his daughter to influence her husband to imitate his conduct and forsake the Emperor. Again she wrote, reminding him of her submission in the past, that he had once loved her as a father should love his daughter, but assuring him that she would not hear a word against Eugène. She concludes by saying that she will not write again to her father, "as filial duty forbids her saying all she feels."

And now Eugène is assailed by serious fears lest the enemy should penetrate so far into Italy that Augusta and her little flock should be forced to fly from Milan. He sends her instructions what to do in such an emergency:

"GRADISCA, *October* 17*th*, 1813.

". . . We must be ready for every emergency, for, if the enemy captured Pino,[1] you would have to make up your mind to leave and go with our children to Geneva, where my mother, as you know, has a little house[2] outside the town. However, I will send Triaire[3] to warn you in good time, and you need not leave Milan until the enemy reach Brescia. You must have plenty of horses to draw your carriages, etc. You will take as your escort mounted dragoons belonging to the guard now in Milan. I do not think that you need be alarmed if you hear that some of the enemy's troops have come down from the mountains. The most you can do for the time being is to pack up your most valuable possessions and get your money from Hennin, so as to be ready to start in twenty-four or forty-eight hours. I repeat, however, that I hope you will not be obliged to do this. . . ."

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[1] General Pino was one of Eugène's generals.

[2] The *château* de Prégny.

[3] Aide-de-camp to Eugène.

As usually happens, when Augusta did have to fly from Italy nobody was prepared, and she and her children were able to save from the wreck of their fortune but little else than the clothes on their backs. It is not to be wondered at that Augusta's health did not improve under these trying circumstances. Continued bad news from her husband, whose troops were being overwhelmed by superior forces, and whose movements were being influenced all unconsciously by the terrible defeat of the second Grand Army outside Leipsic (October 18th), "the Battle of the Nations," as it was called, and also by the Battle of Hanau, when Augusta's compatriots under Wrede[1] fought against the viceroy's army, only aggravated her condition.

The end of October saw the progress of the enemy in Italy still more accentuated. General Fenner had many successes in the Tyrol, whose inhabitants were only too glad to return to their former master. Belluno was invaded by Austrian troops, and Eugène, who had been driven to Udine, was forced back to Verona, where he was soon joined by General Gifflenga, who had just sustained fearful losses. General Grenier, however, obtained a small victory at Bassano, where Eugène took command of the right wing of the army.

During the month of November Eugène's troops obtained one or two insignificant successes and one very important victory at the Battle of Caldiero (November 15th), when 15,000 Austrian troops were killed, 900 taken prisoner and 200 cannons seized. How bitterly on this occasion the viceroy deplored the fact that he had not the same army at his back which he had had in 1809!

It was about this time that Eugène received a visit from Fouché, who had been sent by the Emperor who was back in Paris, to sound the King of Naples and see how matters were progressing in Italy generally. We will quote from Fouché's memoirs:

"I went to confer upon the state of affairs with the prince viceroy, whom I found extremely uneasy but firmly devoted to the Emperor's cause. He was much grieved at the rupture, and had no longer any confidence in the fortunes of Napoleon.

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[1] *Wrede*, Charles Philip, Prince von (1767–1838): commanded France's Bavarian auxiliary troops from 1805 until 1813, and distinguished himself at Abensberg and Wagram, when Napoleon made him count of the French Empire. From 1813 until 1815 he fought for Bavaria and obtained considerable success over France.

'It would have been better,' said he to me, 'if he had lost, without too great disadvantage, the two first battles at the beginning of the campaign; he would have retreated in time behind the Rhine.' I did not conceal from him the fact that I had given to the Emperor the very same advice at Dresden, but that nothing could make any impression upon him. 'It is all the more unfortunate,' said I to him, 'because he loses in person at the first battle and the political reorganization will be settled without him.' Eugène was struck with this reflection, and for the first time, perhaps, he was awake to the instability of his political existence. I did not say anything more upon this occasion, having but little confidence in those about him. He at length owned to me what I had foreseen, that he had strong reasons for believing that Bavaria was at that moment about to detach herself from our alliance; that the Bavarian army upon the frontiers of Austria had made no movement to arrest those of the Austrians, who were advancing in great force, although slowly, through the valley of the Drave, towards the Tyrol; that he himself, being no longer able to govern Italy, was about to retreat behind the Isonzo, in order to interpose the defiles between him and the enemy. . . ."

Fouché anticipates events. Eugène kept his post as viceroy of Italy until April 11th, 1814, when it was taken from him. But it was to the interests of such persons as Fouché and Talleyrand to try and make the Emperor believe that Eugène was about to follow the example of Bernadotte, the Emperor of Austria and the King of Bavaria, who, having taken all they could get from Napoleon, were now falling away from him very much in the same way in which leeches fall off when they have taken their fill of blood. It is comforting to know that the Emperor was not deserted by all those who had received benefits from his hand, that Eugène was only one of several, and that his misfortunes and the calm, dignified way in which he bore those misfortunes won him more than one friend. Even the disastrous Battle of Leipsic was unable to quell the courage of this lion-hearted man; it was after this battle that Carnot,[1] who had hitherto shown dislike for, and mistrust of the Emperor, offered him his sword, which Napoleon accepted.

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[1] *Carnot*, Lazare Nicolas Marguerite (1753–1823): early adopted Republican opinions—and kept them. He voted against Napoleon being made Consul for life and tried to prevent the Empire becoming an accomplished fact. His love for his country and his admiration for Napoleon's bravery induced him to re-enter the army in 1813, and to devote his

And Augusta well realized the Emperor's feelings when she wrote the following noble letter to him :

"MONZA, *November 8th,* 1813.

"Sire—Fear lest I should importune Your Majesty with my letters has hitherto prevented me writing to you. But I should consider myself guilty of undutifulness if, under the circumstances, I did not assure Your Majesty of my tender attachment. *Believe me, nothing on earth shall make me forget my duty, and you can count upon my entire devotion as upon that of Eugène.* He will defend the kingdom to the very last moment. I, for my part, shall try to encourage those weak-hearted creatures who allow themselves to be depressed whenever they hear that there is any danger. If we perish, at least we shall have the consolation of having always done our duty. I beg you not to forget our four children, and to continue to extend your kindness to us ; I hope that we are worthy of it. I have the honour to remain, with the truest affection and deepest respect, Your Majesty's affectionate and obedient daughter."

The above letter destroys the absurd reports which were then in circulation to the effect that Napoleon did not like his "daughter," and that she was afraid of him or despised him as an upstart, rumours which can easily be traced to the hatred of the Bonapartes for anybody connected in any way with the de Beauharnais party.

One proof of Eugène's fidelity to the Emperor's cause lies in the fact that there was not a soldier in the French and Italian armies who did not consider Eugène to be the type of fidelity. Eugène's difficulties were increased by troubles in Ragusa, as we learn from the following letter written by him to General Clarke :[1]

"VERONA, *November 20th,* 1813.

"*Monsieur le duc de Feltre*—The news received from Ragusa dated October 28th confirms the report that Stagno

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talents to saving France. Having been obliged to leave his native land during the Restoration, he died in exile at Magdeburg.

[1] *Clarke,* Henri-Jacques-Guillaume (1765-1818): of Irish origin, was made commander-in-chief of the *armée du Rhin,* marshal of France and head of the War Office. He earned the title of duc de Feltre for preventing the invasion of the English in Holland in 1809. He went into exile with Louis XVIII, having deserted the Emperor during the *Cent-Jours.*

has been captured by a horde of Croatian deserters under the command of several Englishmen. Cattaro was attacked on the 24th by a body of Croatians, Montenegrins and natives of Cattaro. General Gauthier repulsed and inflicted severe losses upon the enemy ; he also did considerable damage to a frigate which was protecting the coast. The English seized the old town of Ragusa on the 28th. Stagno will be a great loss to Ragusa. . . . All the Croatians who were in the old part of the town have deserted as well as their officers. I have also been told that two of the richest inhabitants, having left Ragusa, are now occupied (seconded by a few Englishmen and some pandours) inciting the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages to revolt. These persons include the vice-consul of Naples, Caboga, and Count Bora, who was formerly major in the national guards."

Napoleon still continued to send his step-son numerous letters of advice as to his conduct. The very same day the viceroy wrote the above letter to General Clarke, he received a letter from General Anthouard, who wrote at Napoleon's command, telling him to trust to Generals Zucchi, Palombini and Fontanelli, and impressing upon him that he must not abandon the Adige unless absolutely forced to do so. "It would be dishonourable to abandon the Adige without engaging in a battle ; it would be better to be beaten than to do such a thing." The Emperor—he who more than anybody else needed comfort—exhorts his step-son to trust to the future, repeats that he is *to defend*, not *to evacuate*, Italy, and ends with this encouraging sentence : "I myself have 800,000 men at my command, and money is not scarce."

The King of Bavaria, finding that Eugène would not yield to persuasion, now thought fit to develop the theme upon which he had hitherto hardly dared to touch.

Eugène was at San Michele, near Verona, when, on November 22nd, the Prince von Thurn und Taxis, with whom he was already acquainted, begged to be allowed to have an interview with him, as he had something very important to tell him. The viceroy saw no reason why he should not receive the young man, and so he appointed a meeting in the porch of the village church. The Prince von Thurn und Taxis arrived punctually at the hour fixed by the viceroy. A few minutes later Eugène, accompanied by his staff, rode up the village street and alighted from his horse.

On entering the porch, the Prince von Thurn handed him a letter from the King of Bavaria, in which, after flattering his son-in-law in every conceivable way, that wily king held out a glittering bribe in the shape of the Iron Crown of Italy. Now it is more than probable that Eugène had always hoped that his adoptive father would eventually reward him for his efforts to govern Italy wisely and well by giving him that land as his kingdom. But although Eugène evidently longed for the crown, he was not going to accept that kingdom as a bribe to desert his Emperor. He could accept the crown of Italy from the Emperor's hand, but never from the hand of the King of Bavaria.

Eugène, holding the letter still unopened, and perhaps guessing from the messenger's obsequious manner what the contents were, turned to his staff with an expressive look and said :

" As we are in a free country, and as we have no need to hide anything from this gentleman, I should prefer to breathe the fresh air."

The little group left the porch. While Eugène's staff remained at a respectful distance, the viceroy and the Bavarian King's ambassador strolled up and down the quiet country road. Having inquired after his father-in-law's health, Eugène opened the letter, read it twice from beginning to end, then stopped suddenly in the middle of the road and looking the prince in the face said in a grave voice :

" I am sorry to be obliged to refuse the request of the King my father-in-law, but what he asks me to do is quite impossible."

The Prince von Thurn und Taxis would have been but a poor diplomatist if he had taken any notice of this assertion ; knowing that such offers usually met with a refusal at first, he tried to persuade Eugène to accept either the duchy of Genoa or the infinitely more valuable crown which he was certain the viceroy wanted ; and to obtain his end he reminded him that the children whom he loved so dearly would suffer by a refusal. To this potent argument Eugène replied :

" I know not whether my son is destined to wear the Iron Crown of Italy some day, but in any case he shall only obtain it by fair means."

Even when the Prince von Thurn und Taxis informed him that the Allies had determined to cross the Rhine, terrible news to a true patriot, Napoleon's adopted son did not flinch.

" No one can deny," said he, " that the Emperor's star is beginning to pale, but that is only another reason why those who have received benefits at his hands should remain faithful to him."

He then informed the King of Bavaria's ambassador that he should consider it his duty immediately to acquaint the Emperor of his father-in-law's proposal.

It was rather a shock to Eugène when the Prince von Thurn und Taxis told him that Joachim Murat had made up his mind to go over to the enemy's camp ; however, he contented himself with remarking :

" I think you are mistaken ; if, nevertheless, such should be the case, I should be the last person to approve of the King of Naples' conduct, although our cases are not quite the same, for he is King, whereas I am only the Emperor's representative."

On the Prince von Thurn und Taxis asking him if there was no way of combining his interests with those of his benefactor, Eugène replied that the only thing which he would consent to do would be to conclude an armistice lasting six weeks or two months, with the understanding that Dalmatia was not to be interfered with during that time. In proposing this measure Eugène hoped to gain sufficient time to enable him to strengthen his army. The Prince von Thurn assured him that this could easily be arranged, and promised to let him have a definite reply before another week had elapsed.

Having ordered the Bavarian King's ambassador to tear up his master's letter, Eugène mounted his horse, bade good-bye to his visitor and rode off.

Eugène's first care was to write a detailed account of this interview to his step-father. He then wrote to his father-in-law ; his reply to the King of Bavaria's letter of bribery is just what we might expect from such a man as Eugène has hitherto shown himself to be, affectionate but firm, dignified.

" Sire—I have read Your Majesty's proposals. They are doubtless very advantageous, but they are powerless to make me alter my determination. I must have expressed myself very badly when I last had the honour of seeing Your Majesty if you can think me capable for one instant of selling my honour at any price whatever. Neither the prospect of obtaining the duchy of Genoa nor the kingdom of Italy can make me turn traitor. I feel no temptation to follow the example of the King of Naples. I prefer to become a common soldier rather than be known as a prince who had betrayed his benefactor.

" The Emperor, you say, has ill-treated me. If that is so, I have forgotten it ; I only remember his many acts of kindness towards me. All I am, all I have I owe to him ; my rank, my titles, my fortune, and, what is more, what you are pleased to call my fame. So I am determined to serve him as long as I live. My heart and my strong arm belong to him. May my sword break in my hand before I draw it against my Emperor or against my country. I flatter myself that, as my refusal is prompted by honour, you will at least accord me your esteem. I remain, etc."

On the morrow he writes to tell his wife of the extraordinary proposition made by her father through the Prince von Thurn und Taxis. He says : " I replied as I know you yourself would have replied." He begs her to say nothing about the incident. The King of Bavaria was at the theatre when Eugène's reply and refusal was handed to him. Stéphanie of Baden, Eugène's cousin, who had already told the King that she was sure that the viceroy would have nothing to do with his scheme, was with him at the time. But Maximilian had refused to listen to her, remarking that " the Iron Crown of Italy was a tempting morsel." So when she saw the King of Bavaria's face cloud on reading her cousin's letter, she said with a smile of triumph :

" Well ! what does he say ? "

" You were right. . . . Eugène refuses. . . . I told them so."

" I was sure he would do so, and I told you what would happen. I know him too well not to be sure that he would never consent."

Knowing how grateful the news of her husband's fidelity would be to his mother, Augusta wrote to the ex-Empress Josephine a letter, in which she poured out all her affection for him, and said how proud she was to have such a husband, an expression which her father repeated to her when he wrote from Carlsruhe, saying that " Eugène had done perfectly right," and that " there are not two men in the world like him."

CHAPTER XII

Joachim Murat shows his hand—Augusta pays her husband a flying visit—France is invaded—The Emperor at bay—Murat signs a treaty with Austria but hesitates to declare war against France—More attempts are made to bribe Eugène—Augusta's painful position—Eugène begs the Emperor to let him know his intentions concerning Italy—He issues another proclamation—He endeavours to influence Murat—The Battle of the Mincio—Napoleon sends the viceroy his instructions—Josephine and Hortense urge Eugène to keep faithful—Napoleon wins his last victories—Eugène writes to Marshal Bellegarde, begging him to protect Augusta—Napoleon's anger on hearing of Eugène's letter and the marshal's reply—Fouché pays Eugène another visit—Eugène's last victory—Murat writes to Napoleon.

NAPOLEON'S life about this time was full of very bitter experiences. The family which he, like a true Italian, had loved so much, for which he had worked so hard, and which, perhaps, were the cause of his undoing, were preparing to turn against him. It was a cruel blow to the Emperor when Murat, backed by his wife Caroline, Napoleon's own sister, *la Carolina*, began to behave in a most unseemly manner, and complicated matters by threatening to carry out his oft-repeated promise of joining the confederate sovereigns. Towards the end of November Eugène received news that two Neapolitan corps were moving north, one towards Rome, the other towards Ancona.

This and other disagreeable news probably induced Napoleon to utter the words reproduced by Eugène in a letter to his wife, November 26th, 1813: "I hasten to send you some news which I have just received from Paris. The Emperor is reported to have said: '*I am at last going to make peace; I must abandon the continental system;* I will even go so far as to relinquish the Venetian States to Austria; but Italy must receive Piedmont in exchange, and France must keep her natural boundaries: the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees.' . . ."

But the time was soon coming when Napoleon would cease to dictate his wishes to Europe, when he would have to take what Europe would consent to give him.

During the Battle of Legnago, which was fought on November 28th, Eugène was slightly wounded in the right thigh by a bullet ; nevertheless, he refused to return to camp, but remained in the saddle until the battle, which lasted several hours, was over.

On the morrow he wrote to inform his sister of the King of Bavaria's proposal, of his wife's noble letter of protestations of affection and fidelity to the Emperor, and of her determination not to correspond with her family until affairs were more settled.

The first week of December brought disaster upon disaster to the unfortunate viceroy. The towns of Zara, Cattaro and Ragusa, after being blockaded and bombarded, gave in one after the other to the enemy. Although Eugène's troops won several small victories at Rovigo, Boara, Edolo, Castagnaro and Forli, these victories were powerless to compensate for Murat's defection and perfidious behaviour in sending troops to complicate matters still more for the *armée d'Italie*.

About the middle of this same month (December) Augusta paid her husband a flying visit. She travelled alone on this occasion, for, as we learn from one of Eugène's letters, if she had brought one of her children without bringing the others, the little flock would have been broken-hearted. However, she could not bring all, for, supposing she had been obliged to fly at a moment's notice, the presence of four tiny children would have added to their parents' anxiety and complicated matters. We can be sure that the little four-year-old Auguste was terribly disappointed at not being taken to see his papa, for somebody had just made him a little uniform which he wanted to show his dear father. Eugène says in one of his letters : " Embrace our children for me. Auguste must look as pretty as a picture in his volunteer's coat."

Things were looking so serious in Naples that Eugène now considered it his duty to inform his adoptive father of what was going on there :

" VERONA, *December 20th*, 1813.

" I presume, Sire, that your Ministers keep you informed of everything which is now happening. The King of Naples is seen walking out alone or else driving in an open carriage with General Lecchi, who only a short time ago was rowing in a galley. The latter has told the King that he only has to show himself in Italy for everybody to follow him. The King delights in repeating—and he has even informed my aide-de-camp—that you have no idea all the harm he, as king, might do to Your Majesty in Italy. He asked my aide-de-camp what I should do under the circumstances. On hearing that nothing would induce me to abandon Your Majesty, the King grumbled and said that I was over-submissive, and that he himself was only tolerated by his subjects because they were sure that 'he would defend them from the Emperor.' In short, Sire, two English cartel-ships are now at anchor under the walls of the King's palace. The Austrian Minister landed a few days ago in one of the ports of the Adriatic, and immediately sent a messenger to the King. A storm is brewing for us in Southern Italy. At any other time we should have no cause to fear the King of Naples' follies; but now, with the enemy's army encamped in our midst, any chance of peace being concluded would be gladly welcomed by the nation, for nobody doubts the fact that the King has signed a treaty with the allied sovereigns. As for me, I am now quite convinced that his intentions are more than ambiguous, and that our enemies, having failed to influence me, are now trying to bribe the King of Naples. . . ."

Augusta had been lately somewhat alarmed by the report that large bodies of Austrian troops had been seen in Switzerland. In his New Year's letter Eugène seeks to re-assure her by telling her that these troops are all going towards France, and that the almost impassable state of the Alpine passes at that time of the year will prevent them attacking Italy, that he has lately heard from Paris that the Emperor has said that Italy was the only country which had remained faithful to him, and that he himself hopes, from the Emperor's attitude, that peace will soon be concluded. He recommends his wife to write a few lines of New Year wishes to her father and her family, avoiding any allusion to either home or foreign politics.

The year 1814 saw France invaded on all sides. The Emperor scarcely dared to hope for better things for himself and his unhappy country, but on January 1st he found courage to thank Eugène for his good wishes.

"PARIS, *January 1st*, 1814.

"My Son—It has given me great pleasure to receive the proofs of your devotion to me. I thank you for the good wishes contained in your letter, and I hope that the New Year will be as productive of glory to yourself as of happiness to the vice-reine and your children."

History tells us that Napoleon had not allowed France to be invaded without offering resistance. Wonderful to relate, another huge army of 300,000 men, notwithstanding the fearful drain upon the youth of France during the last few years, answered the Emperor's call to defend the fatherland, now in danger indeed. Those who had seen the crossing of the Beresina brushed the evil dream away with one hand, while with the other they grasped their trusty sword and swore to chase the trio of enemies back into their respective territories. Those who had been orphaned in Russia or Poland or Austria dried the old mother's tears, and spoke of that other mother who was now calling to her children to defend her as the dead father had done. For Napoleon was now fighting not against one foe, but against the whole of Europe ; first against his " friend " Alexander of Russia, secondly against his father-in-law, Francis I of Austria, and thirdly against Frederick William III of Prussia ; while Maximilian-Joseph, King of Bavaria, Murat, King of Naples, George III, King of England, Ferdinand, King of Spain, with two or three dethroned sovereigns stood watching the game in the background, ready to fly to the rescue of the three first, should the Grand Army win the day. We can only account for the fact that 300,000 troops responded to Napoleon's call to his treatment of his fellow-men. The French soldiers' love for their Emperor, immortalized by Heine and Schumann in *Die beiden Grenadiere*, had become a sort of religion. A typical anecdote, as related by several of Napoleon's biographers, tells us that one day when the Emperor, wearing his beloved *redingote grise*, was walking ahead of his staff up a steep mountain path, he overtook an old peasant woman hobbling uphill as fast as her many years and many infirmities would permit her.

" Whither away so fast, mother ? " cried the Emperor.

" I'm going to see the Emperor ride over the top of the pass," wheezed the old dame, much too hurried to waste her time by looking up to see who was addressing her.

"And why, pray, do you want to see the Emperor? Emperors are only tyrants; they care nothing for poor folk like you and me."

"Aye! other emperors belong to the nobles, whereas *our* Emperor is the people's Emperor!"

And it was this wonderful man who was now being forced to conclude a peace. But before that peace could be concluded much water was to flow beneath the many bridges which span the tranquil bosom of the Seine.

Eugène's letters to his wife dated January 5th, 10th and 12th tell her that she need not dread an invasion of Russian and German troops in Italy; nevertheless he speaks of Mantua as being a suitable city of refuge should the Austrian and Neapolitan troops advance much farther. In his letter of January 12th he tells Augusta the news that Caulaincourt has gone to parley with the allied sovereigns. We find a charming love letter written by Eugène on January 14th, the eighth anniversary of their wedding day:

"I need but remember this date, my dear Augusta, to realize that Providence guided my steps through life. What happiness, what bliss I owe to that 14th of January which united my fate to that of the most beautiful, the most virtuous of women! I refrain from repeating this fact lest I should make you blush; but I realize it more each day, and I would gladly love you more so that I might love you as you deserve to be loved. Adieu, my good friend. May we both live to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our marriage! And may God refrain from summoning one away without the other!"

On January 11th Murat made his first move by signing a treaty with Austria, and so cut himself off for ever from Napoleon's affection. Before a week had elapsed General Miollis, who was but poorly provided with troops in Rome, beheld the Holy City invaded by 5000 Neapolitan troops. He was forced to retreat to the castle of Sant' Angelo, where he and his soldiers hid themselves, half-starved and trembling for what would happen next. General Lasalcette at Civita-Vecchia was more fortunate. Having been warned in time that he might expect to share General Miollis' fate, he gathered together as many supplies as he could, shut the gates of the town, and waited until he could leave in safety.

For the first time in his career Napoleon found that he could not dictate his wishes to his audience; the allied sovereigns were determined to dictate *their* wishes to their late master. Napoleon writes to his step-son:

"PARIS, *January 17th*, 1814.

"My Son—You will have learnt of all my efforts to make peace from the different reports which have appeared in the newspapers. I have lately sent my Foreign Minister to the outposts of the allied armies. The sovereigns, however, refused to see him, and they continue to advance! The duc d'Otrante[1] will have informed you that the King of Naples has gone over to our enemies. It seems to me that, as soon as you receive *an official announcement*, you ought to cross the Alps with the whole of your army. If you are obliged to take this step, you must leave the Italians to protect Mantua and other strongholds, and you must take care to remove the silver, the treasury, and all valuable objects belonging to my household."

Let my readers remark that Napoleon uses the expression: *an official announcement*, for Eugène's honour depended upon obeying his step-father's commands to the letter.

On the same day Eugène wrote to tell his wife that the old bribe of the Iron Crown of Italy had again been dangled before his eyes. He also informed her that Austria had refused to conclude an armistice with him, except on the conditions mentioned to him by the Prince von Thurn und Taxis during the interview at San Michele. Eugène ends his letter thus:

"In what times we live! and how the glory of a throne is degraded when those who wish to reign must be cowardly, ungrateful, deceitful! No, I shall never be a king!"

Augusta's fate was not an enviable one during the winter of 1813–14; her anxiety was doubled by the fact that she was expecting to be confined in the spring. Whither could she go for safety? Wounded pride prevented her asking her father to give her shelter. France, invaded on all sides, was out of the question. And then she was determined to remain near her husband, whose letters still contained repeated assurances that he would warn her in good time if she had to fly. To reassure her, he tells her that the Austrians will not be able to cut off communications with Alexandria, for he shall be there to prevent them; that people in Paris declare that a peace is about to be concluded, but that he himself will not be at all surprised if a great battle is fought in France. He alludes to Murat's behaviour: "As for the King of Naples, people say that he has refused to fight against France. He will probably content himself with seizing some French territory." In another letter he cannot restrain his indignation: "Those cursed Neapolitans! did you ever hear of such perfidy? They will not declare war, and yet they continue to advance. . . . Never mind; I promise you that I will be even with them!"

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[1] Fouché.

Murat's hesitation in declaring war was doubtless due to his desire to see how matters went with his once powerful brother-in-law, who evidently intended to "die game."

But Eugène's position in Italy was becoming more and more difficult; so well did he realize the fact that on January 29th he wrote to the Emperor begging him to let him know his wishes as soon as possible.

On February 1st Eugène issued a lengthy proclamation to his French and Italian troops, in which he informed them of the King of Naples' defection, besought his men to rally round him, "their sovereign's son," assured them that he should never cease to love and care for them, and concluded with the famous sentence: "Italians! in the annals of foreign nations they alone are immortal who know how to live and die faithful to their vows and to their duty, faithful to gratitude and honour."

Eugène determined, as a last resource, to try and bring the Emperor's brother-in-law to a sense of his honour. Having received a very ambiguous epistle from that gentleman, the viceroy replied as follows:

"MANTUA, *February 4th*, 1814.

"I see by Your Majesty's letter and by the postscript added in your own handwriting, how painful you find your present position. These struggles with your conscience do not surprise me ; but I must confess that I was touched as I read of them. It is impossible, in short, that Your Majesty can endure unconcerned the thought of seeing Frenchmen at war with other Frenchmen who have ever been proud to call them brethren ! May Your Majesty listen to the voice of your heart ; may you resist temptation which would only bring bitter regret in its train. Wait a little longer before doing anything desperate. The Emperor has left Paris. In a few days the time of danger, or at least of uncertainty, will be over, and then Your Majesty will find a way to act with satisfaction to your heart and your conscience."

This appeal fell upon stony ground. So well, however, did the French and Italian troops reply to Eugène's appeal to their patriotism that on February 8th, this nineteenth-century Bayard was able to add another branch to his sheaf of laurels.

The battle fought on the banks of the Mincio beloved of Virgil, the scene of General Brune's[1] victory in 1800, was not an easy victory, for Eugène began the day under unfavourable conditions, having made a miscalculation as to the enemy's movements. On this occasion Eugène's troops had to attack much sooner than they had expected, for they found that the enemy, instead of being still between Roverbella and Villafranca, had already crossed the Mincio. Although General Verdier did not second Eugène as he ought to have done, the Italian troops fought so bravely that they were able to drive the enemy back towards the heights of Valeggio, when night forced Eugène to return to his camp outside Goïto. The Battle of the Mincio, fought February 8th, stopped, for a time, the invasion of Italy by the Austrian troops, and prevented the junction of Austria's army with the Neapolitan troops.

While the battle was being fought Napoleon was at Nogent watching the tidal-wave of ill-luck invading the fair land of France. The sanguinary battle outside Brienne, where the young Napoleon had conned the alphabet of waging war, had

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[1] *Brune, Guillaume-Marie-Anne* (1763–1815): the friend of Danton. He entered the army, fought bravely at Arcole and Rivoli, won a victory over the Anglo-Russian troops at Bergen, was sent to pacify La Vendée, won the Battle of the Mincio in Italy, was made marshal, and ambassador at Constantinople. Having incurred the Emperor's displeasure, he left the army until the *Cent-Jours*, when he took command of the *armée du Var*. He was murdered by Royalists after the Battle of Waterloo.

NAPOLEON'S ARRIVAL AT THE COLLEGE OF BRIENNE

From the picture by Réalier-Dumas. By kind permission of the artist

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been fought only a few days ago, when 12,000 troops of that third Grand Army had been taken prisoner. It must have been with a heavy heart that the Emperor wrote from Nogent another letter of instructions to the duc de Feltre,[1] at that time Minister of War :

"NOGENT, *February 8th*, 1814.

"*Monsieur le duc de Feltre*—I have given orders to the viceroy to retreat towards the Alps as soon as the King of Naples declares war. Repeat this command to him by telegraph, by *estafette*, and in triplicate by an aide-de-camp. You will tell him that he must leave none but Italian troops in the Italian strongholds, and that he must bring every French soldier back to France, either through Turin and Lyons, either by Fenestrelle or by the Mont Cenis. On entering Savoy he will be met by all our troops now in Lyons. Write also to the grand-duchess[2] and to General Miollis, and inform them that the grand-duchy of Tuscany and the city of Rome will no longer be tenable as soon as the King of Naples declares war. Therefore the viceroy must give up all strongholds to the King of Naples, at the same time stipulating that all French troops and officials be allowed to retreat towards the Alps, the Mont Cenis and Briançon with their arms and artillery. Send the duc d'Otrante,[3] if he is still in Tuscany, orders to go and interview the King of Naples, in order to arrange the matter. The French troops and officials will move in the same direction. Be sure to make it quite clear that, under no excuse whatever, are any French troops to remain in any Italian stronghold, and that they are all to return to France by Chambéry, Lyons or Grenoble."

On February 9th the duc de Feltre executed the Emperor's orders and sent the despatch in question.

It must have cost Napoleon something to relinquish Italy, the scene of his first successes ; but he had not given up all hope of recovering that valuable territory, for he said to General Anthouard, whom he had summoned to his side : "I am relinquishing Italy, but if I am vanquished I shall have to relinquish something more important than Italy. However, if I beat the allied sovereigns, Italy will soon return to me."

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[1] General Clarke.

[2] Napoleon made his sister Elisa Bacciochi grand-duchess of Tuscany in 1809. This territory became the property of Austria in 1814.

[3] Fouché.

One would think that after all the proofs Eugène had given to the Emperor of his fidelity, the latter would have had no doubts as to his step-son's conduct in the future. And yet we learn from the following letter from Josephine to her son that such was not the case :

"La Malmaison, *February 9th*, 1814.

"Do not lose a minute, my dear Eugène ; no matter what obstacles you may encounter, be doubly careful to obey the orders which the Emperor has sent you. He has just written to me on the subject. He wishes you to retreat towards the Alps, leaving only Italian troops in Milan and in the different strongholds of Italy ; his letter concludes with these words : 'France before everything ! France has need of all her children !'

"So hasten, my son. Never will you be able to serve the Emperor better than now. I beg you to realize that every minute is precious. I know that your wife is about to leave Milan. Can I be of use to her ? Adieu, my dear Eugène. I only have time to embrace you, and to repeat to you my prayers to come at once."

At the Emperor's request, Hortense also wrote to her brother :

"I send you the Emperor's letter to the Empress, and our mother's reply. I cannot make head or tail of the matter. . . . However, peace must be going to be concluded, for everybody says so. Nevertheless, that will not prevent us being taken prisoner in Paris. A few days will decide the matter. One thing which proves that the Emperor does not expect you to return to France is that he says in his letter that he commands you only to leave Italy when the King of Naples has declared war against him ; and I wager that he never thought that this war would come about, although he must have expected it for many a long day. . . . It is true that nothing is more painful than to see those we love very dearly in the wrong. Your proclamations are wonderful, and you need never envy your powerful neighbour. You will soon find yourself in a very embarrassing position. . . . Do what you think best. I am sure that you will always serve the Emperor to the best of your ability, and that he will never doubt your fidelity. As this is the only reward you can hope to obtain, it would be a thousand pities not to win it."

Josephine had no illusions as to Italy's fate, for she said to her daughter : " I am convinced that the Emperor will relinquish Italy ; but, no matter what happens, our dear Eugène will have won a reputation for honesty, honour and gratitude, and that is better than anything."

We will now quote from Marmont's *Memoirs :*

" The Emperor, whose army had been strengthened by the division of young guards headed by the duc de Trévise,[1] beat Sacken[2] at Montmirail.[3]. . . The very evening of the Battle of Montmirail, the comte de Tascher, the viceroy's aide-de-camp, arrived from Italy, in order to inform the Emperor that Eugène had beaten the Austrians on the Mincio. When Tascher was announced, Napoleon said : ' He has doubtless come to tell me that Eugène has begun to move.' This speech of Napoleon's proves that he had not given Eugène any counter-orders, as the latter's friends declare Napoleon did after the engagements at Montmirail and Vauchamps, that is to say about February 15th ; but this wellnigh ridiculous reason by no means excuses him. Everybody acknowledges that Eugène received orders to return to France in the beginning of January. But who authorized him, not only to postpone the execution of those orders, but even his preparations ? When did Napoleon require his services ? As soon as possible ; that is to say, at a time when he was fighting with the remnant of his army against fearful odds, when he was standing on the brink of the precipice, when he was obliged to sacrifice everything in order to save himself. The struggle could not have lasted much longer. If Eugène was to be any help to him, he ought to have come at once. We cannot imagine how else he could have been of use. Well, from January 1st until February 25th, between which two dates the pretended counter-order is supposed to have reached him, did he make any preparations to return to France? And yet, if he wished to be successful, he would have had to make many preparations. Did he blow up the fortresses which he had been ordered to evacuate? Did he so much as mine one bastion? No; Eugène disobeyed; he, more than anyone else, helped to bring about the catastrophe. Nothing can excuse his conduct. . . ."

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[1] *Mortier,* Joseph (1768–1835): fought bravely in the wars of the Republic and the Empire, and was made duc de Trévise after the Battle of Friedland (1807). He was Minister of War when he was killed, while sitting by the side of Louis-Philippe, by the explosion of Fieschi's infernal machine.

[2] *Sacken,* Prince Fabian von der Osten (1752–1837): a Russian field-marshal, first fought against the Turks and the Poles ; was sent to fight Masséna in Switzerland, but was beaten and taken prisoner at the Battle of Zurich. Having regained his liberty he returned to his own country for a time, and then again fought against Turkey. He was beaten by Napoleon at the above-mentioned battle at Montmirail. As Governor of Paris in this same year (1814) he made himself popular by his moderation and justice.

[3] February 11th, 1814.

We notice one or two errors in the above page of the memoirs of the man who, some say, was the cause of Napoleon's abdication. First of all, it was during this very same interview that Napoleon told the comte de Tascher to impress upon Eugène that he was *to keep Italy as long as possible.* "Tell him," Napoleon said, "that he is to defend himself, and to take no notice of the movements of the Neapolitan army, which is composed of undisciplined troops under the command of the King of Naples, who is crazy, and ungrateful into the bargain. Supposing he is obliged to abandon any territory, he must be careful only to leave in those strongholds which he is positively forced to relinquish, just sufficient Italian troops to hold the place, only to retreat inch by inch, defending himself all the time; and finally, if he is pressed too hard, he must do his best to make a stand and give battle under the walls of Milan. If he is vanquished, he must cross the Alps as best he can; he must not give up any territory until he is positively obliged to do so. *Tell Eugène that I am pleased with him,* that he is to inform the Italian army how delighted I am with its behaviour, and that he is to order a salute to be fired to celebrate the victories of Champaubert and Montmirail."

Marmont likewise asserts that Eugène had made no preparations for departure. The following letter settles that question; it is written by Eugène to the duc de Feltre:

"VOLTA, *February* 16*th*, 1814, 5 a.m.

"*Monsieur le duc*—I have just received your despatch of the 9th inst., in which you inform me of the Emperor's instructions concerning the army; viz. that I am to leave Italy *as soon as the King of Naples declares war against France.* These instructions confirm those which the Emperor sent me a fortnight ago. I will be careful to obey his commands.

"Hitherto the Neapolitans have not been able to declare war, although the King has concluded a treaty with the enemy, because they are still waiting for that treaty to be ratified. I shall take care to be warned in time.

" So my retreat, which is conditional, will be effected as slowly as possible, unless the presence in France of my army is considered necessary, and you send me positive orders to come. . . ."

The letters of good advice written to Eugène by his mother and sister told the viceroy that his enemies had been trying to do him another bad turn. Thinking that a letter of explanation would not come amiss, he wrote to his stepfather :

" Sire—From a letter which I have lately received from the Empress Josephine, I gather that Your Majesty blames me for not having displayed sufficient diligence in executing the commands contained in your letter in cipher, and which the duc de Feltre repeated to me on the 9th inst.

" Your Majesty seems to think that inducements other than my devotion to your person and my love for my country are required to make me return to France at the present moment.

" I beg Your Majesty's pardon, but I must tell you that I neither deserve your reproaches nor your mistrust of the sentiments which will ever govern my conduct.

" Your Majesty sent me express commands that in the event of the King of Naples declaring war against France, I was to cross the Alps. As these commands were conditional, I should have done wrong had I executed them without waiting for the condition to be accomplished. However, by making a retrograde movement, and by drawing up my army in echelons outside Piacenza, I am now in a position to execute the retreat which Your Majesty ordered me to execute as soon as the King of Naples, having made up his mind, finally declares war against us. His troops hitherto have been guilty of no acts of hostility against those of Your Majesty. The King has always refused to take an active part in the matter with Austria. He informed me only two days ago that he had no intention of offending Your Majesty, and at the same time he gave me to understand that it would only require some little stroke of good luck to induce him to declare himself for the flag under which he has fought hitherto. So Your Majesty can see that I could not possibly carry out your conditional commands. But supposing I had interpreted your orders otherwise, and had withdrawn my army on receiving those orders, what would have happened?

"My army numbers 36,000 troops, of whom 24,000 are Italian, and 12,000 French. But of these 24,000 Italian troops more than half are natives of Genoa, Tuscany, Piedmont and the Papal States, and not one of them would have consented to cross the Alps. The troops belonging to the departments of Léman and Mont Blanc, who have already begun to desert, would have soon followed the example of the Italians, and I should have found myself at Fenestrelle or on the Mont Cenis Pass (for I should have started as soon as I had received your commands) with scarcely 1000 troops pursued by 70,000 Austrian and Neapolitan troops, which two armies, freed from the presence of the French army, which has served more as a protection to them than as a drag upon their movements, would have been forced to attack us. It is also quite certain that by evacuating Italy completely we should have sent a vast number of your subjects over to the enemy.

"I am therefore convinced that the retrograde movement prescribed by Your Majesty would have been fatal to your army, and that it is a very good thing that I have not been able to act so far.

"But if Your Majesty really wished me to return to France with what I had been able to keep of your army as soon as possible, why did you not deign to order me to do so? You must know that your slightest wish is as law to me, and Your Majesty has taught me that we soldiers are forbidden to question your intentions, and that we must content ourselves with executing your commands.

"Be this as it may, it is impossible that such doubts should assail Your Majesty's mind. Such complete devotion as mine must have excited jealousy. May it never alter Your Majesty's affection for me, for that affection will ever be my most precious reward! The ambition of my life will be to show that I deserved it, and I shall never cease to make it my pride to show you my attachment and serve you."

Although Napoleon's successes at Champaubert, Montmirail, Château Thierry and Vauchamps had put new courage into the viceroy's heart, he, on beholding Italy invaded on all sides, shrunk from being separated from his beloved wife during the coming spring, when another helpless little being would be opening its eyes for the first time, and so many important questions, both in Italy and in France, would have to be decided. In his desire to find a place of safety to which his wife could retire if necessary, he committed an act which was misinterpreted at that time, and blamed as an act of infidelity to Napoleon's cause. He wrote to Marshal Bellegarde,[1] the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army, begging him to see that his wife was not molested in any way, supposing she were taken ill while still at Monza and thus unable to join her husband. Esteem for the Princess, or a desire not to offend her father, brought forth a very civil reply from Marshal Bellegarde, in which he said that she might stay wherever she liked, provided that she did not choose Milan, promised to take the greatest care of her and her little ones, and added that, after her recovery, she would be free to join her husband wherever he might happen to be.

The Emperor of Austria, having heard of Eugène's request, also wrote to Augusta from Troyes, where he was about to begin his humiliation of the Emperor of France :

"TROYES, *February* 18*th*, 1814.

"*Madame ma cousine*—Marshal Bellegarde having informed me of Your Imperial Highness's determination to fix your residence for the present at the palace of Monza, I beg you to be assured that this general did quite right in endeavouring to please Your Imperial Highness. I have just sent word that a guard of honour is to attend you, so you will be perfectly free to go wherever you like ; and I can only regret the reasons which force you, Madame, to adopt an attitude which would flatter me under any other circumstances. I beg you, *Madame ma cousine*, to believe me ever your affectionate and respectful cousin, "FRANCIS."

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[1] *Bellegarde*, Heinrich, Graf von (1755–1831): a general in the Austrian army, served under the archduke Karl ; he was unsuccessful against Napoleon on many occasions. In 1806 he was made field-marshal ; and from 1814 until 1815 he governed Austria's possessions in Italy.

Napoleon soon heard of the correspondence between Bellegarde and Eugène. It caused a burst of anger from the much-tried Emperor, who considered himself still able to protect his daughter, and told Eugène that he had not only humiliated himself, but, what was more important, the Emperor too, by stooping to parley with his enemies. How dare the Emperor of Austria say he would protect Augusta? Forgetful of the fact that he was not dealing with a body of soldiers, but with a woman who had been in a delicate state of health for some months owing to anxiety for her husband's safety, Napoleon wrote off a stern letter to his adopted son, who was then at Volta, commanding him to send Augusta to Paris without more ado. Augusta gives vent to her outraged feelings in the following letter to Hortense :

"*February* 19*th*, 1814.

" . . . In the midst of all my troubles and anxieties, at least I had the consolation of thinking that the Emperor was content with Eugène's behaviour ; but now even this consolation has been taken from me, for Eugène has told me that he hears from Paris that he has been cruelly blamed. I must confess that I did not expect this last blow ; and I am indignant, my dear sister, to see that, although Eugène's conduct has always been beyond reproach, calumny is believed. I dare to assert that nobody has served the Emperor more faithfully and with such perfect disinterestedness ; he has never trod in any path but the path of virtue and honour.

" And what has been his reward ? You know the sorrow which he has had to endure. He has never allowed himself to utter a word of complaint, and he has never ceased to sacrifice himself to the Emperor's interests. He endangers his life every day at the risk of leaving his wife and children defenceless. And yet, had he uttered but one word, he would have obtained a kingdom. But a crown is worthless in my eyes if it has to be bought with infamy and treachery. I love to think that the Emperor does not really wish to grieve us, and that he has been deceived by false rumours. It is sad to think that one has enemies, even when one has done no harm to anybody. As for me, my sister, I am disgusted with the whole affair. My health is affected. I cannot sleep. Can anything be more painful to me than to see Eugène, *he whom*

I love more than my life, unhappy ? . . . If I knew of a peaceful corner in the world, I would go and bury myself there with my poor children. Posterity will do justice to us, and God will compensate us in another world for all we have suffered in this. I had hoped to retire to Monza, if Eugène had been obliged to leave Italy, for the doctors told me that it would be very dangerous for me to travel just now. But as this step might be misinterpreted, I am going to write to Eugène to ask him to let me follow him. May God's will be done ! . . . Do not be surprised if I succumb under my burden of grief. I should have liked to have written to the Emperor, but I do not know if Eugène would have approved. Adieu, my dear sister. Our trials are manifold, but our consciences are clear. I embrace you tenderly."

In her letter to her husband Augusta writes she is no longer surprised that the Emperor's friends abandon him. She says: " *Can anybody be more ungrateful than this man has been ?* After all you have done for him, your wonderful feats of valour, *only to receive blame as your reward !* . . . If I fall into the enemy's clutches they cannot treat me more cruelly than *the Emperor, who has plunged a dagger* into my heart." After telling him that she is going to send her children away and share his fate, she concludes : " If I could go with you to America, I would gladly do so, for I am really disgusted with worldly grandeur. . . . Adieu, my beloved husband. When shall we be at the end of our troubles ? If they continue much longer, my health will be ruined. I can write no more. I must go and lie down. . . ."

It became more than ever evident that Eugène was playing a losing game in Italy. As we have seen from his letters to the Emperor, desertion was rife among his troops. He now learnt that Ancona had given in to the enemy on February 15th ; four days later Leghorn opened her gates to English troops. He himself saw that he was fighting for the sake of honour, and that the end was only a question of time. Terrified at the prospect of his dear ones finding themselves homeless in the near future, he hinted to Augusta that he was counting upon her father to shelter them should he find that France, the natural shelter, was closed to the Emperor's faithful servitor. Did he foresee that his master would soon be homeless? The King of Bavaria was equally concerned for the safety of his daughter, and the son-in-law whom he had learnt to love as he deserved to be loved.

Strange to say, the King of Naples still hesitated to declare war against Napoleon, although his conduct in invading the viceroy's territory was tantamount to a declaration of war. The officers whom Eugène sent to interview Murat all assured him that they did not think that the king would do so unless he was forced to do so by Austria. Now the latter's recent failure on the Mincio seemed to have checked her ardour somewhat. And then Napoleon's victories at Briey and Montereau acted as another check upon the hot-headed King of Naples, who now limited his peregrinations to the vicinity of the Po.

It is strange to think how blind even the greatest of men are towards the merits of their servitors. Fouché, of whom it was said that he did a little good and a great deal of evil, whose treachery was even too much for the Bourbons, tells us how he fulfilled a mission to Italy which Napoleon entrusted to him soon after the Battle of Montereau:

"The viceroy Eugène was soon nothing more in the eyes of the Lombards than the obedient executor of all his (Napoleon's) works. Latterly Eugène seemed to fear becoming popular, lest he should excite jealousy. Eugène, although a brave soldier and of approved loyalty, was parsimonious, rather light, too docile to the advice of those who flattered his taste, but little acquainted with the character of the people whom he governed, and placing too much confidence in a few ambitious Frenchmen. He needed an equal degree of political knowledge to that which he possessed of military affairs. During these latter days of difficulty, this prince completed the people's discontent by conscriptions and forced requisitions; in short, the viceroy yielded too much both to the example and the impulse of the sovereign ruler. His position became the more difficult as he had soon against him both the partisans of Italian independence and those of the ancient order of things. The first, becoming daily more uneasy, looked round for assistance. Like his adoptive father, Eugène found no other for the maintenance of authority but in his army, which he lost no time in organizing and disciplining. . . . Before setting off for France, I proceeded to Volta, the head-quarters of the viceroy. He had effected his retreat upon the Mincio, and upon the King of Naples' declaration of war against France, had fought with the Austrians one of those battles which, being of no decisive effect as to politics, are only productive of military glory. I had two private conferences with the viceroy, in which I represented to him that fighting battles was now the more useless as everything would be decided within the environs of Paris. I dissuaded him from obeying the Emperor's orders to march the army of Italy upon the Vosges ; first, because it was now too late for a junction to be effected ; and secondly, because, by crossing the Alps, he would for ever lose his Lombardian possessions. Eugène owned to me that Murat had made him a secret proposal to unite their forces for the purpose of sharing Italy after having sent away the French troops, and that he had rejected this absurd offer ; that his declaration of war had placed him, Eugène, in the greatest embarrassment ; and that he feared he could hold out no longer if Murat should serve the Austrians with any degree of zeal. I made him easy upon this point, being well acquainted with the uncertain character of Murat, and knowing besides that his wishes for the independence of Italy had already been counteracted by the Allies. I was at Eugène's head-quarters when Faypoult, formerly a prefect, a man in whom Murat placed some confidence, arrived. He had been sent by Napoleon to Murat, as well as to Eugène, with the intelligence of the recent successes he had obtained at Briey and at Montereau. These advantages were purposely exaggerated, for the double object of keeping up Eugène's hopes, and damping Murat's zeal in the cause of his new allies. Count de Tascher, one of Eugène's aides-de-camp, whom he had despatched to Napoleon, had returned also with the utmost expedition, and reported to him the very words which the Emperor, intoxicated with some brilliant but transient success, had addressed to him : ' Return to Eugène,' said Napoleon ; ' tell him how I have trimmed these scoundrels ; they are a set of rabble whom I will whip out of my dominions.' Universal joy prevailed at head-quarters. I took Eugène aside and told him that such bombast ought to inspire with confidence only such as were mad enthusiasts, but that it would have no effect upon reasonable people ; that the latter saw, in its full extent, the imminent danger which threatened the imperial throne ; that arms were not wanting to defend the Government, but rather the sentiments to set them in action ; and that by separating himself from the nation, the Emperor, by his despotism, had destroyed all public spirit. I gave Eugène some advice, and I began my journey to Lyons. . . ."

We notice that Fouché says that Murat had declared war against the viceroy, and yet, as we shall soon see, that astute sovereign was still hesitating whether he should advance or retreat. We also note that Fouché blames Eugène for submission to the Emperor, while Marmont blames him for disobedience. Both were wrong.

We grant that Fouché had an intimate knowledge of the moral evils to which our frail human nature is heir, but his blindness to the good qualities of some of his contemporaries is really remarkable. He says that "the Emperor, by his despotism, had destroyed all public spirit." How little he knew ! Eugène was now straining every nerve to carry out the Emperor's order that he was not to evacuate Italy until Murat had sent him an official announcement of the fact that he had declared war against his brother-in-law. As that announcement did not come, Eugène considered it his duty to remain where he was.

But now, on February 27th, Eugène received further orders, telling him not to evacuate Italy on any consideration. And yet how gladly Eugène would have returned to France to fight by the side of his adoptive father.

My readers may remember that Marmont speaks in the extract from his *Memoirs* quoted by us on page 307 of some "counter-orders which Eugène's friends declare were sent to him after the Battle of Vauchamps." The following letter from the viceroy to General Clarke is an indirect answer to Marmont's covert hint of a falsehood :

"VOLTA, *February 27th*, 1814.

"*Monsieur le duc de Feltre*—Just as I received your letter of the 17th inst., my aide-de-camp, the Comte de Tascher, whom I had sent to the Emperor, brought me other orders from the Emperor *absolutely contrary to any evacuation of Italy*. I hasten to inform you of the fact."

It was a great grief to Eugène to find that his step-father could imagine for one minute that his intention in writing to Marshal Bellegarde was to curry favour with France's enemy. We find traces of that grief in a letter written to his step-father, in which he reminds his benefactor that Augusta's health has been far from satisfactory lately, remarks that it is scarcely likely to improve under present circumstances, but that he is sure that, as soon as she is well enough to travel, she will obey the Emperor's commands and come to Paris.

Augusta, however, sent a very different letter to the Emperor. She almost scolded him, told him pretty plainly that he was a brute to expect her to come all the way to Paris in her present condition, and added that it was shameful to think that anybody could still doubt Eugène's fidelity after all the proofs he had lately given to his benefactor. She informed the Emperor of the fact that her father had offered to shelter her and her husband and little ones, but that she had refused all assistance lest the enemies of France should say that she had abandoned the Emperor's cause. Her letter ends thus : " It is clearly my duty, if Eugène will not speak out, to do so for him. Nevertheless, I will obey your commands. I will leave Milan as soon as the enemy appear. But it is my duty to stay with my husband, and, since you command me to risk my life, I will at least have the consolation of ending my days in the arms of him who possesses my affection, him to whom I owe all my happiness. . . ." The Emperor's reply to this plain-spoken effusion is that of a governess lecturing a wilful little girl :

" SOISSONS, *March 12th*, 1814.

" My Daughter—I have just received your letter. Knowing your vivacity and your somewhat touchy character, I am not surprised at the way in which you took my letter. I was afraid lest you, with your highly strung nerves, might have a miscarriage in a country which is overrun by enemies at the present moment and the scene of frequent battles. I thought the best way to ensure your safety would be for you to come to Paris. I did not tell you so before, because Paris was in danger then, and I considered that nothing was to be gained by exposing you to needless anxiety. But I considered that it would only be to your advantage to undertake this journey as soon as Paris was no longer threatened. Acknowledge your injustice. Your heart, I know, will show you how you have erred."

But we must go back a few days. Napoleon's letters continued to urge Eugène to keep possession of Italy at all costs, no matter what Murat might or might not do. March 3rd, however, saw Eugène obliged to make a retrograde movement towards the Mincio, owing to the continued advance of the Austrian troops. Verona had become untenable. Eugène, therefore, took up a position on the right bank of the Mincio, and prepared for another battle. On the morning of March 4th he divided his army into two columns, one of which was despatched across the river by the bridge of Goïto, while the other crossed the bridge of Mantua, and then both attacked the Austrian army simultaneously. The result was satisfactory for Eugène, for Austria's losses amounted to 7000, while Eugène, whose losses barely reached half that number, and who fought throughout the battle with the courage of despair, once more found an opportunity in which to show that he had served his apprenticeship with a past-master in the art of making war. It was frequently a hand-to-hand encounter. Eugène had the satisfaction of taking forty Austrian officers to the prison in Mantua, where poor Andreas Hofer had looked his last upon this pleasant world. Eugène slept on the battle-field that night.

This is how Marmont describes Eugène's last important victory :

" Eugène evacuated Verona and effected his retreat. The Austrian army followed slowly. Neither side engaged in battle, for the Austrian general, who was not eager to fight, believed that Eugène had agreed to evacuate Verona, and so considered himself authorized to take possession of the territory. But this did not suit Eugène's plans. If he wished to remain, he would have to turn the tables upon Austria. Their behaviour made this an easy matter. So he suddenly took advantage of their security to attack them in rather a disloyal manner. He won an unimportant victory over them. By acting thus, he hoped to throw dust in Napoleon's eyes. . . ."

An old saying, "All's fair in love and war," holds good all the world over. Marmont shows us that there are two ways of putting most facts. Eugène was as much at liberty to draw his enemies into an ambush as any other general in history. Had Marmont been fighting for his own interests, we doubt whether he would have acted otherwise.

Eugène's pride in his success was damped by reports of Murat's sayings and doings. His thoughts often turned to the young wife during these weeks of suspense. We find a touching little note enclosing a few early violets written by the viceroy from Volta, which town he was preparing to leave in order to go to Mantua, that city seated in the midst of reeds and marshes like a wild-fowl in her nest, which city he considered a more suitable place from which to direct his operations :

"VOLTA, *March 6th,* 1814.

"I rode on horseback this morning as usual. Would you believe it ? I found these violets which I now send you. They will remind you of the happy time when we gathered violets together. Patience ! those happy days will soon return once more."

On this same day Eugène, at Salconze, won another but a smaller victory over Austria, when the latter lost 100 prisoners and had 400 troops placed *hors de combat.* Six days later Napoleon informed his adopted son that he had received a most remarkable letter from Murat :

"SOISSONS, *March 12th,* 1814.

"My Son—I send you a copy of a very extraordinary letter which I have just received from the King of Naples. Such sentiments, when I and France are being assassinated, are truly inconceivable. I have also received your letter concerning the scheme for a treaty which the king sent you. You yourself must realize that it is a mad scheme. However, send a messenger to this crazy traitor, and draw up a treaty with him in my name. Do not touch Piedmont or Genoa, but divide the rest of Italy into two kingdoms. Keep this treaty secret until you have driven the Austrians out of the country. Let the king show his hand twenty-four hours after signing the treaty, and then fall upon the enemy. I give you a free hand in the matter ; everything must now be sacrificed in order to join forces with those of the King of Naples. We will afterwards *do what we like,* for nobody can be expected to keep faith with a person who has been guilty of such behaviour at such a time. As I want to put a spoke in his wheel, I have ordered the Pope to be sent via Piacenza, and Parma, to the outposts. I have informed the Pope that, as he has expressed a wish to be allowed to return to his diocese, I shall forbid him to do so. Be careful not to pledge your word to the Pope, neither to recognize his power, nor to refuse to do so."

Copy of Murat's letter to the Emperor. (*Undated.*)

" Sire—Your Majesty is in danger. The very capital of France is threatened, and I am powerless to defend either the one or the other ! I cannot die for you ! To think that Your Majesty's most devoted friend should appear as if he were your enemy ! Sire, say but one word and I will sacrifice my family and my subjects. I may ruin myself, but at least I shall have been of use to you ; I shall have proved to you that I was ever your best friend. I ask for naught else provided that the viceroy explains my conduct to you. . . . Tears fill my eyes and prevent me finishing this letter. I am alone here, amid foreigners. I must even hide my tears. This letter, Sire, places my fate in your hands. My life belongs to you. I have sworn to *die* for Your Majesty. If you could see me, if you could realize all I have suffered during the last two months, you would have pity upon me. Continue to love me ; never was I more worthy of your affection. Your friend until death."

Well might Eugène say of the writer of the above effusion: " What a fearful traitor Murat is ! " And Napoleon, in order to save France, was now trying to bribe this man to aid him in his task. Why, if Murat was so devoted to Napoleon, did he continue to behave as if he were his worst enemy, and place so many obstacles in the viceroy's path ?

CHAPTER XIII

Murat's behaviour excites indignation—Augusta takes shelter in Mantua —Napoleon "forfeits" the throne of France—Eugène's mission ends —The King of Bavaria urges him to leave Italy—Birth of another daughter—The Italian army begs Eugène to remain in Italy—He bids farewell to his troops—Murder of Prina—Napoleon leaves France —Eugène goes with his family to Munich—Josephine wishes her son to be made *connétable*—Eugène pays a visit to Paris—He is introduced to the new tenant of the Tuileries and makes many friends—Illness and death of the ex-Empress Josephine.

NAPOLEON, in urging his "daughter" to come to Paris for her confinement, little thought that his proud capital in less than three weeks would be invaded by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, amid cries of: "*Vive l'empereur Alexandre! Vivent les Bourbons! A bas le tyran!*" and that he himself would be obliged to fly to Fontainebleau, there to attempt to put an end to his mental tortures by taking poison.

Murat's behaviour foretold coming events. He now declared war against France. Now would have been the time for Eugène to fly to his adoptive father's assistance, had he not received the counter-order mentioned in his letter to the duc de Feltre. On hearing of Murat's behaviour several French officers in the Neapolitan army preferred to leave Naples rather than fight against Eugène, the Emperor's representative. And although these officers did not help to swell the ranks of the viceroy's fast-diminishing army in any extraordinary degree, they were able to give him valuable moral support.

Stifling his anger at his compatriots' decision to join the viceroy, Murat tried to persuade them to remain with him. "Do you think," said he, "that I am less patriotic than you are? You are mistaken! I am greatly to be pitied. I only know that disasters are falling thick and fast upon the Grand Army. I have been obliged to conclude a treaty with the Austrians, to make an arrangement with the English, and, consequently, to declare war in order to save my kingdom from invasion by the English and Sicilian troops, which event would have indubitably caused an insurrection. Perhaps things will now take a turn for the better. Stay with me. I have given you advancement ; other privileges are in store for you. It is ungrateful of you to leave my service when you know how I desire your welfare."

But these fine phrases had no effect upon the French officers, who knew why Murat had showered so many favours upon them.

Murat then wrote to the viceroy, telling him that he was sending him troops *to help him drive the Austrians back into their own country*, and begging him to provide the said troops with food and ammunition.

The fatal month of March was slipping away, but before it closed it brought more disasters to Italy. On the 23rd, some Sicilian and English troops, notwithstanding Murat's mysterious " arrangement," landed in Tuscany, and spread all along the coast, despite General Rouyer Saint-Victor's endeavours to stop their advance.

On March 29th, Augusta, after hesitating whether she had better go to Alexandria or Mantua for her confinement, decided to join her husband in the latter town. She had so endeared herself to the Italian populace that when she bade farewell to the good city of Milan many shed tears. Her reception by the troops quartered in the marsh city of Mantua, where she was virtually going to shut herself up and wait for events to shape themselves, was no less touching. Everybody admired her courage. All sorts of rumours had lately been circulated among the Italian troops. It was said that Eugène had been taken prisoner by Marshal Bellegarde, and that the vice-reine had fled to Germany ; but here she was in their midst, willing and prepared to face the unknown with a courage which only the thought of other people's sufferings could quell.

And now Napoleon's star began to sink over the horizon, a horizon black with the smoke of burning Moscow, red with the blood of the thousands of brave men who had given their lives for him.

Marmont now rewarded his Emperor in a most cruel manner. He abandoned his benefactor just at the very moment when the latter had most need of his services, evacuated a position which was by no means desperate, and on April 3rd, although he still had a fine army at his back, entered into negotiations with the Allies. On this same day the Senate solemnly declared that Napoleon the Great had forfeited the throne. Five days later, Eugène, unaware that his adoptive father was no longer Emperor, wrote the following letter to his master, his last official report although he was unaware of that fact :

"MANTUA, *April 8th*, 1814.

" Sire—I think it my duty, considering the last news from France and the effect produced thereby, to send one of my aides-de-camp to Your Majesty. I am charging this gentleman to inform Your Majesty of the present condition of my army in Italy, and to bring me Your Majesty's instructions. Notwithstanding the enemy's very superior forces (for Marshal Bellegarde has an army of 70,000 men, the King of Naples 24,000, and the Anglo-Sicilians 8000), Your Majesty's army in Italy is still defending the Mincio and the Taro ; the troops charged to protect Genoa have several outposts beyond Sestri di Levante. The greater part of the army is on the Mincio. I have charged my aide-de-camp, General Gifflenga, verbally to describe to Your Majesty our position and what I propose to do according to the enemy's movements."

We see that Eugène to the very last tried to save the kingdom which had been given into his charge. But his efforts were useless. On April 7th, General Rouyer Saint-Victor was attacked and overwhelmed by Sicilian and English troops under Lord Bentinck.[1] Venice surrendered to the enemy April 10th, and Genoa, which Napoleon had been so anxious to save, followed suit a few days later.

April 11th saw the signing of the treaty in which Napoleon relinquished all claims to the thrones of France and Italy, and thereby released Eugène from his vows of fidelity. It is true that, even in this hour of despair, Napoleon did not forget his adopted son, and stipulated in the same treaty that Eugène was to be given a suitable establishment outside the frontiers of France; but he might just as well have saved himself the trouble for all the effect it had.

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[1] *Lord Bentinck*, William Charles Cavendish (1774–1839): was given the post of Governor of Madras at the age of twenty ; commanded the English troops in Sicily. Having, in 1814, received orders to stir up Italy against Napoleon, he managed, by promising Genoa to re-establish a republic, to get that State to join him against Napoleon. As Governor-general of India, he won golden opinions for himself.

The viceroy had been without news from France for several days, and was in a state of great anxiety when, on this very same day, April 11th, rumours that Paris had capitulated reached the city of refuge where Eugène and his wife were still hoping against hope, and endeavouring to protect themselves from the Austrians, who were now within sight of Mantua. Poor Eugène! it was some time before he could realize that his step-father's brilliant career and his own mission were things of the past. The King of Bavaria learnt of the Emperor's downfall some hours before the news reached Eugène. He writes as follows:

"MUNICH, *April 11th,* 1814.

"My beloved Son—So far I have only been able to approve your loyalty, my dear friend—nay, I will even say that it made me proud to have such a son. Now that things have taken quite another turn, as you will see by the enclosed pamphlet, you can leave the country without dishonouring yourself. You owe it to your wife and children. This evening a courier arrived bringing me the news that Marmont had come over to our side with 6000 infantry troops—all old soldiers—2000 mounts and twenty guns.

"The marshals have forced the Emperor, who is at Fontainebleau, to abdicate by declaring that his army would no longer obey him. He agreed to abdicate on condition that the Empress was made Regent and the King of Rome Emperor. Ney, Macdonald and Caulaincourt have gone to Paris with this proposal in the name of the army. They are awaiting the arrival of the Emperor of Austria before giving their reply. I fancy it will be a negative one, for the Bourbons have already got too many partisans.

"All the Allies are for us, my dear Eugène; so take advantage of their goodwill and think of your family.

"It would be unpardonable to keep silent any longer. Adieu, my dear son. The Queen embraces you, Augusta and your children.

"I remain your affectionate father,

"MAXIMILIAN-JOSEPH."

"P.S.—The Empress Josephine left for Navarre on the 29th."

We find a repetition of the King of Bavaria's assertion that the allied sovereigns were inclined to treat Eugène mercifully in a letter written by Hortense to her lady-in-waiting, Mlle. Cochelet, called *Mlle. Cochelaide,* on account of her plain features.

" . . . My brother," writes Hortense on April 12th, " will, I hope, be treated well, and will no longer be exposed to danger. He must be anxious for us. I dare not write to him ; he would not get my letters. If you find an opportunity to do so, tell him that we are no longer in danger."

Eugène's order of release came not a day too soon; he and his wife and children and army were now practically prisoners in the town of Mantua.

On April 13th a little girl,[1] Eugène's fifth child, came into the world amid the roar of the enemy's cannons announcing to the besieged city of Mantua that Paris had capitulated. Three days later another salvo from the Austrian camp told the baby's parents that the Allies had entered the fair capital, whereupon Generals von Niepper and Wartenberg, aides-de-camp to the King of Bavaria, came to parley with Eugène. Seeing that all was lost, Eugène, now no longer viceroy, consented to sign a treaty with Bellegarde by which the latter agreed to allow all French soldiers to return to their native land. Unaware of the treaty of Fontainebleau, which had settled his fate, Eugène still considered it his duty to remain at his post, and he was strengthened in this determination by the army of Italy, which, beginning to realize his worth when it was about to lose him, now begged him to remain as viceroy or to accept the crown of Italy. Generals Fontanelli and Bertoletti were instructed to go to Paris, interview the Allies, and explain Italy's wishes upon the subject.

To his brave French soldiers who were now returning to their homes Eugène expressed his gratitude in a speech which must have brought tears to the eyes of many an old soldier. After speaking of France as the beloved mother who was now calling her children back to her sheltering arms, he told his troops how proud he would have been to take them home himself ; and he assured them that under any other circumstances he would never have allowed anybody else to lead back to port those brave fellows who had fought so long and so valiantly by his side. He concluded with these words: "My affection and gratitude, as well as the love and esteem of the Italian people, will follow you wherever you go."

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[1] This child was named Théodolinde.

Before taking their troops back to their native land, the French generals, headed by General Grenier, signed and presented to their commander-in-chief the following document, which was rendered still more valuable by the names of all the Italian officers:

"*Monseigneur*—The French army considers that it has a duty to perform before starting for home; it wishes to place at Your Imperial Highness' feet a proof of the gratitude and veneration which it feels for your august person.

"*The army of Italy will always be proud of its chief;* the mere fact of having served under Your Imperial Majesty will be in itself a title of nobility.

"That you may enjoy that happiness and glory which your fine and noble qualities deserve is the wish of the entire army which has so often had occasion to appreciate, and will never forget them."

We can easily imagine that this unsolicited testimonial, coming from both the Italian and French armies, was particularly welcome to Eugène at a time when the future was hidden by threatening clouds.

Eugène's reply to the above testimonial is too long to reproduce, but we are fain to give the closing sentence of that touching *résumé* of the incidents which had bound the Italian and French armies to their leader with the bond of fellowship:

"And you, brave Italian soldiers, I bear indelibly engraved on my heart all your features, the memory of all your services, all your wounds, those wounds which I with my own eyes saw received, those services the just reward for which I was instrumental in obtaining. . . . Perhaps you will see me no more at your head and by your side! Perhaps I shall never again hear your cries of victory! But if ever the fatherland calls you to arms again, I am sure, brave soldiers, that you will still love to remember in the midst of danger the name of Eugène."

Now although the Italian army wished its brave commander to remain at the head of the government, such was not the case with the Italian nobility, who, notwithstanding all the viceroy's attempts to be conciliating, and his seeming success, were only waiting for an occasion upon which to reconquer their independence. On April 20th a band of titled ruffians, under the guidance of Melzi[1] and General Pino, secretly encouraged thereunto by Austria, attacked the Senate in Milan, pillaged that edifice and seized the Minister of Finances, Prina, whom they first tortured and then murdered. They finished up their performance by burning his house. It was said that Pino was a great gambler, and that he owed Prina a large sum of money ; rather than have to pay his debts, he preferred to suppress his creditor. It is hard to say what would have happened if General Miollis, who had left Naples on learning of the capitulation of Paris, had not entered Milan, and, with his 2000 troops, put a stop to the rioting. We are inclined to think that the senators of Milan got no more than they deserved ; for having, after one of Napoleon's last victories, nominated a deputation to go and congratulate *Napoleon the Great* upon the fact that he had triumphed over his enemies, the deputation took so long to get to Paris that it found on its arrival that Napoleon was no longer master, whereupon it congratulated the allied sovereigns upon the *fall of the tyrant*.

On learning of this insurrection, Eugène was recommended to send troops to complete the task begun by General Miollis. This, however, he refused to do, as he wished the country to be at liberty to choose or reject him as their future governor. Nine days after the birth of Eugène's fifth child, he and his family moved to Verona, where he was received with every mark of respect by Marshal Bellegarde.

Let us leave Italy for a moment, and turn our thoughts to Fontainebleau, where a great man was suffering as great men alone can suffer. Before leaving France, Napoleon wrote the following letter to the woman whom he had loved best on earth :

"To the Empress Josephine at La Malmaison.

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *April 16th*, 1814.

"Dear Josephine—I wrote to you on the 8th of this month ; but perhaps you did not get my letter, as it was a Friday. As they were still fighting, it is quite possible that it was intercepted. Communications have now been re-established. I have made up my mind. I do not doubt that this letter will reach you.

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[1] *Melzi*, Francesco (1753–1816), chamberlain to Maria Theresa, associated himself with General Bonaparte during the Italian campaign. The latter made him vice-president of the Cisalpine Republic (1812), chancellor of the Italian kingdom (1805), and duc de Lodi (1807). His behaviour, after Napoleon's downfall, did not profit him to any great extent.

" I will not repeat all I said to you in my last letter. I then complained of my position, now I am thankful for it. A huge weight has fallen from my heart and my brain. Great has been my fall, but at least it will have been of some use—so they say !

" I am going to exchange the sword for the pen in my retreat.

" The history of my reign will make curious reading. The world has hitherto only seen me in profile; I shall now draw a full-length portrait of myself. What numbers of secrets I shall have to reveal ! What false opinions we form of our fellow-men ! . . . I have showered benefits upon thousands of villains—see how they have treated me lately !

" They have all betrayed me, yes, every one of them ! I except from this number our good Eugène, who is so worthy of you and me. May he be happy under a king who knows how to appreciate the sentiments of nature and honour.

" Adieu, my dear Josephine. Resign yourself as I have resigned myself, and never forget him who has never forgotten you and never will forget you. Adieu, Josephine.

" NAPOLEON."

" P.S.—I shall expect news from you at the island of Elba. I am not well."

On April 27th, Napoleon, still an Emperor at heart, left for his miniature kingdom, where his foes had every intention of keeping him as long as that prodigious brain continued to work.

Before another twenty-four hours had elapsed, Eugène, his task accomplished, yielded to his wife and his father-in-law's prayers, and left Italy, never to return. How gladly would he have turned his steps towards the land of his birth ; but he knew that, notwithstanding the allied sovereigns' pretended goodwill for him, there was no place for him there. No ; he took the road to Munich, where, eight years before, he had arrived full of hope for the future.

The little party travelled slowly in order to spare Augusta any unnecessary fatigue. The little prince and his sisters were given into the especial care of Baron Darnay. Their escort consisted of twelve members of Eugène's former household. So sudden was their departure from Italy that they were only able to take what was absolutely necessary. But then Eugène knew that he, as viceroy, only had the enjoyment of the valuable furniture, plate, jewels, etc., during the term of his office. Before leaving Italy, Eugène, at the request of his mother and sister, wrote to the Emperor Alexander, explaining the awkward position in which they were placed. Alexander sent a civil reply, promised to look after their interests, and at the same time expressed his intention of showing his esteem for the viceroy in a substantial manner on some future occasion.

During the journey through the Tyrol to Munich Eugène and his family were respectfully saluted by the inhabitants. The memory of his efforts to tone down Napoleon's harsh orders was still fresh.

The King of Bavaria received his daughter and her husband and family very kindly. To his honour be it said that he did his best to make them forget that they were refugees. On reaching Munich, Eugène found a letter from his mother recommending him to come to Paris as soon as possible, as his presence was absolutely necessary, if he did not wish to be left out in the cold. She reminded him that he ought to consider his children's interests, and assured him that Louis XVIII bore him no ill-will for having refused to betray the Emperor.

The grains of sand had begun to run very quickly through the hour-glass of the ex-Empress Josephine. She had only a few more weeks to live, and yet to the very last she plotted and planned for her family.

The Emperor Alexander had received but a cold welcome at the hands of the Parisians after the first; so when he found that the ex-Empress was ready to be polite to him and to treat him as if he were one of France's best friends, he felt it incumbent upon him to make some return for her courtesy. After having confided to her intimate friend, Mme. de Rémusat, that she should like Eugène to be made *connétable,* Josephine broached the subject to the Emperor Alexander, and found him quite willing to support her demand. Did not Alexander say of the ex-Empress and of her family : " I like and respect that family ; I esteem the Empress, Prince Eugène and Queen Hortense all the more because they behaved far better towards the Emperor than many who had more reason to be grateful to him " ?

Josephine and Hortense would not leave Eugène in peace until they had extorted a promise from him to come up to Paris. He left Munich early in May, and reached La Malmaison on the 9th. He found his mother and sister in consultation with their new friend. Hortense describes Eugène's meeting with the Czar in her memoirs :

" On noticing that my mother and the Czar had withdrawn aside, doubtless in order to say something private, my brother and I thought it better to retire. The Czar gave his arm to the Empress, and they then went into the garden, where they strolled for about twenty minutes. On returning to the house, he welcomed us most kindly. He told us that he would take upon himself to introduce us to Louis XVIII, and assured my brother that His Majesty intended to make him marshal of France, and that, although peace was about to be signed, he was convinced that the king would employ him on occasion.

" ' Your behaviour,' said the Czar to him, ' can be quoted as an example to the army. *Monsieur*, you are the Bayard of the century ! ' "

At the Czar's advice, Eugène went up to Paris that very day and paid a visit to the new tenant of the Tuileries. By some mistake the duc d'Aumont [1] announced him as the *Marquis de Beauharnais*. Louis XVIII rose from his throne and not only held out his hand affectionately to the ex-viceroy, but kissed him on both cheeks ; then turning sharply towards the duke, he said :

" Say His Highness the Prince Eugène, *Monsieur*, and add *grand connétable* de France, if such be his good pleasure."

So favourable an impression did Eugène make upon Louis XVIII that it was said that the latter would have gladly given him a place at his Court had not intrigues prevented him doing so. But we can safely say that Eugène would have refused such a post.

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[1] *d'Aumont*, Louis Celeste, duc: gentleman of the Bedchamber to Louis XVIII.

Eugène tells his wife his impressions in the following letter:

"PARIS, *May 9th*, 1814.

"My good Augusta—I reached La Malmaison very early this morning. I found my mother and my sister in excellent health; they send you their best love. I thought it my duty to present my respects to the King of France; so, no sooner had I embraced my mother than I asked and obtained permission to appear at the Tuileries. Louis XVIII received me most kindly, and asked eagerly after your health.

"Now for business: we must not expect to be treated too well. Everybody wants a slice of the cake, and everybody thinks he has a right to a big slice. It is quite true that the most sacred family ties count for nothing where politics are concerned. I am returning to La Malmaison, from whence I shall write to you when I feel less tired. I long to hear of the arrival of our little angels. Take great care of your health, my good Augusta. We shall never find greater happiness in this world than in our mutual affection."

Eugène has been blamed, and justly blamed, for going to pay his respects to the effete successor of Napoleon, the man who had usurped his step-father's place.

During one of Eugène's visits to his sister's *hôtel* in Paris, he took part in a conversation with Mme du Cayla,[1] one of Louis XVIII's favourites, when the Czar, to whom this lady bore some spite on account of his friendship for the duc de Richelieu,[2] for whom she herself had no affection, passed a very uncomfortable quarter of an hour. Eugène was talking about the ingratitude of the French nobility towards the Emperor Napoleon. That ingratitude had manifested itself in many painful and ridiculous ways. During a state performance at the Opera, the aristocratic audience, perceiving that one of the opera-boxes was still decorated with an imperial eagle, had yelled, "Down with the turkey!" "I can understand," said Eugène, "one dynasty being preferred to another, and women, in especial, never think of asking themselves which system of government is the best or most adapted to their country's needs, for they are guided by their own inclinations. But how could these women forget themselves as well-born women, and, above all, as Frenchwomen, in the presence of the enemy ? How could they go and meet foreign troops, fête them, applaud them when those troops were still covered with their compatriots' blood ? Ah ! *madame*, confess that you lost your head, and then I shall understand."

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[1] *Cayla*, Zoé Talon, comtesse de (1784–1850): the mistress of Louis XVIII, who gave her the *château* of Saint-Ouen. She wasted a good deal of time and energy in trying to harm the duc de Richelieu in the eyes of her royal friend. To her, M. de Villèle owed his advancement.

[2] *Richelieu*, Armand Emmanuel, duc de (1766–1822): Foreign Minister under Louis XVIII; signed the treaty of 1815.

" But," protested Mme. du Cayla, with all the arrogance of a royal favourite, " we did not go to meet the enemy ; they, by bringing back the sovereign we had never ceased to love, became our friends."

" Nevertheless they were the enemies of France," said Eugène. " Your sovereigns ought not to wish to be considered independent of the country over which they have been called to rule once more ; and you compromised them by giving your support and your applause to the conquerors of your vanquished brothers."

" And yet," retorted the worthy rival of Mesdames de Balbi[1] and de Polastron,[2] with a smile of pity at Eugène's naïveté, " and yet, without their help, we should never have been able to bring our King back. The end justifies the means ; and rest assured that without us and the applause which, as the populace would have nothing to say to them, we the nobility showered upon the Allies, they would have done nothing. We gained our cause at the expense of our pride."

Even Talleyrand would not have been ashamed of Eugène's reply :

" I am glad to hear from your lips that the populace did not take part in the applause, and that the Bourbons only owe the throne to the efforts of young and pretty women like yourself."

The Bourbons do not seem to have been popular with one of their protectors, for the Emperor Alexander in a moment of wild confidence said to Eugène shortly before his departure from Paris :

" I know not whether I shall ever have occasion to regret having reinstated the Bourbons upon the throne. We had them in Russia, and we know what to expect of them ! . . ."

[1] *Mme. de Balbi*, née de Caumont La Force.

[2] *Louise d'Esparbès*, comtesse de Polastron (1764–1804): the mistress and companion in exile of the comte d'Artois, later Charles X.

The Czar seems to have taken a liking to Eugène from their very first interview; extravagant and multifold were the promises made by him to his protégé. At one time he said that he would give him the duchy of Genoa, at another he assured him that he should have a German principality with not less than 60,000 inhabitants. Eugène thought himself lucky when he eventually obtained the principality of Eichstätt, with 7000 inhabitants.

Alexander was not Eugène's only friend at Court. *Monsieur*[1] and his children,[2] and the duc de Berry[3] in especial, learned during his brief visit to appreciate his noble qualities and his proud and independent spirit.

The Czar and Eugène paid frequent visits to Hortense at Saint-Leu, where she now reigned as Duchesse de Saint-Leu, a title which she owed to Louis XVIII, when she would take her guests for long drives in the neighbouring forest of Montmorency. On the occasion of one of these visits, Hortense's two little sons, Napoleon-Louis[4] and Louis-Napoleon,[5] were taken down to the drawing-room to say *bonjour* to the Czar of Russia and the King of Prussia. Accustomed from their babyhood to be surrounded by kings and princes, the two sons of Louis Bonaparte were neither awed by the titles nor by the tall stature of their mother's visitors. The youngest child, who was then about six years of age, after looking very intently at the two sovereigns, whispered to his governess:

"*Mademoiselle*, are these gentlemen also our uncles, and must I call them *uncle?*"

"No, Louis, you must say *Sire* to them."

"But how is it they are not our uncles?" queried *Napoléon le Petit.*

This was an awkward question. Their governess, who was probably a better patriot than their mother, took the little boys in a corner and told them that these two gentlemen had lately conquered France. Louis-Napoleon's face clouded over, and he stamped his little foot with anger, crying:

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[1] *Charles X* (Charles-Philippe), 1757–1836: grandson of Louis XV, also known as the comte d'Artois; he reigned from 1824 to 1830, when he was dethroned. He married, in 1773, Maria Theresa of Savoy. He died at Goritz in Illyria.

[2] *The duc d'Angoulême* (1775–1844) and the *duc de Berry* (1778–1820).

[3] *duc de Berry*, Charles-Ferdinand (1778–1820): second son of Charles X, was assassinated by Louvel while leaving the opera-house in Paris. He had one son and one daughter by his wife, princess Caroline of Naples. His son bore the titles of duc de Bordeaux and comte de Chambord.

[4] *Napoleon-Louis* (1804–31).

[5] *Charles-Louis-Napoleon* (1808–73): usually called Louis-Napoleon.

"Then they are our uncle's enemies? Why did the Emperor of Russia kiss me?"

"Because he is a generous enemy. But for him you would not have a *sou* in the world, and your uncles would be even more unhappy than they are now."

"Then we must love the Emperor Alexander?"

"Certainly, because you owe him much."

Such reasoning was almost beyond the child's comprehension. He said nothing more, but continued to examine the Czar. The Czar paid Hortense another visit on the morrow. While the Duchesse de Saint-Leu was seated in her drawing-room engaged in conversation with her guest, the door opened very softly, and a little boy crept up unnoticed behind the Czar's chair, slipped something hard and bright into his hand, and then, without opening his mouth, ran out of the room as fast as the little feet could take him.

The duchess called Louis-Napoleon back in rather a severe tone, and asked him what he meant by such extraordinary behaviour. Tears filled the child's eyes, and he blushed as he stammered:

"Oh! mama, that's the ring Uncle Eugène gave me. I wanted to give it to the Emperor Alexander because he is so kind to us."

Hortense smiled, while the Czar took the little Louis-Napoleon upon his knee, stroked the soft hair, pinched and kissed the chubby cheeks alternately. Having fastened the ring to his watch-chain, he solemnly vowed to keep it in memory of his little friend.

Hortense did not accept her new title of duchess with all the gratitude expected of her; in fact, she protested at being addressed no more as queen, and remarked to one of her gossips:

"I think it my duty not to allow people to forget that I have been queen, although I am not particularly anxious to bear that title. Did not the newspapers say that my brother, on going to present his respects to the king, was announced as the Marquis de Beauharnais? He thought it beneath him to deny the report, but he was very foolish not to do so."

Mlle. Cochelet was instructed to go to Paris and inform M.

de Nesselrode[1] that *Queen* Hortense would accept nothing from the hands of Louis XVIII; on hearing which news, M. de Nesselrode wisely replied:

"What can I do in the matter? . . . Louis XVIII is anxious to spare the feelings of Prince Eugène, the Queen and the Empress; but I fancy he desires to treat them as if we were still in 1789, for he and his party refuse to recognize any new titles, and the titles of queen and empress are distasteful to them."

As for the ex-Empress Josephine, her indignation was even greater when the following announcement appeared in the *Journal des Débats*:

"The Emperor of Russia went the day before yesterday to the *château* of Saint-Leu, near Montmorency, where he dined with Prince Eugène and the latter's mother and sister."

"What!" cried she, "could they not speak of me with more respect? Must I come after my son, then? It is most unseemly. I have a title; I was crowned and anointed. The Emperor Alexander is my protector; he sent soldiers to defend La Malmaison as soon as he had captured the bridge of Neuilly. Why, then, do they call me simply the mother of Prince Eugène? Doubtless that title is dearer to me than any other, but a journalist should not forget that I was once his sovereign."

Eugène did not take Alexander's promises of help very seriously, and it was a good thing he did not do so, for he soon learnt that nothing would be done for him before October, when a Congress was to be held at Vienna, and his case would be attended to.

In the following letter we find the first mention of Josephine's illness. He writes to Augusta from La Malmaison, May 25th:

". . . Our mother has been very unwell for the last two days, and this morning she had a great deal of fever. The doctor says it is only a cold, but I don't think she looks at all well. My sister has a bad attack of inflammation of the lungs. Their fate will soon be settled, I hope, and then they will have no need to worry themselves as to the future."

Beyond taking an annual trip to Aix-les-Bains or Plombières, when her cure was made an excuse to amuse herself, Josephine's health had been excellent. And in this respect she was more fortunate than the lymphatic woman who took her place by the Emperor's side.

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[1] *Nesselrode*, Charles Robert, count of (1780–1862): a Russian diplomatist who obtained great influence over the Czar of Russia. He took part in most of the treaties concluded between Napoleon and his late friends.

However, she was now really ill, and, as is frequently the case when the cry of "wolf" has been heard too often, she and her *entourage* were unaware that she was in any danger. Putrid sore throat quickly declared itself.

She had invited her two protectors, the Czar of Russia and the King of Prussia, to lunch on May 27th. Although she was feeling very unwell, she insisted upon dressing and going downstairs to receive her distinguished guests. She was able to sit through the meal, but was too ill to swallow anything. So visibly was she suffering that her guests retired as soon as they had drunk their coffee, when Eugène escorted them back to Paris.

Josephine passed a restless night, and sank into a lethargic slumber towards dawn. This state lasted for about five hours. Hortense and Eugène took turns to watch beside her bedside. On the morrow, her condition becoming hopeless, Drs. Horeau[1] and Laserre warned Eugène and his sister that all would soon be over. The Emperor Alexander called early that morning at La Malmaison to inquire after her health. He was genuinely shocked when he was ushered into the little bedroom where the ex-Empress lay dying. Eugène and Hortense were on their knees receiving her blessing as the Czar entered. Grief prevented them speaking to him ; their sobs filled the room.

The tutor of Hortense's children, an ex-priest, heard her confession and gave her absolution that evening.

A few hours later, on May 29th, 1814, Josephine passed away, at the age of fifty-three. Eugène was obliged to tear Hortense, who herself was ill with anxiety and a severe chill, away from their mother's death-bed.

Eugène and Hortense had in common that filial affection which is inherent to the French nation, and bitterly did they mourn their mother, whose faults were forgiven and forgotten in the stern presence of Death.

So crushed was Eugène by this sudden and unexpected death, that he had to commission his aide-de-camp, the comte de Méjean, to write to the Baroness von Wurmbs, to beg her to break the news to Augusta of the decease of her who, he said, "had loved her as tenderly as if she had been her own daughter."

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[1] A pupil of the celebrated Dr. Corvisart.

On the morrow he found courage to take the pen in his hand and to tell his dear companion of his loss. Then he, too, fell ill, so ill, indeed, that he was unable to accompany his mother's remains to their last resting-place in the little church at Rueil, near La Malmaison, where Josephine had passed both the happiest and the saddest years of her life.

By a strange coincidence Hortense, too, was unable to attend her mother's funeral, for she was seized with a fainting fit just as the coffin was being carried downstairs. The chief mourners were Hortense's little boys, Napoleon-Louis and Louis-Napoleon, who walked one on either side of their dead grandmother's lady-in-waiting, the Comtesse d'Arberg,[1] each holding one of her hands. The road from La Malmaison to Rueil was kept by troops. The Grand-duke of Baden, the marquis de Beauharnais, the comte de Tascher, and representatives of the Czar of Russia and the King of Prussia assisted at the funeral ceremony, when a touching oration drew tears from the eyes of those who had known the dead woman in prosperity and in adversity.[2]

Augusta, on learning of her husband's grief and illness, was most anxious to set off for Paris, that she might comfort and console him as she alone knew how to do. It was with the greatest difficulty that she was persuaded to remain with her father and the little flock of curly-headed children.

A disagreeable surprise awaited Eugène. His mother's extravagance had caused her family much annoyance during her lifetime, and was fated to continue to do so after her death. To his horror Eugène now discovered that his mother's debts amounted to considerably more than two million francs.[3] But he was determined that he would not return to Munich until every *sou* had been paid.

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[1] *The comtesse d'Arberg:* descended from a German royal family and the wife of a distinguished Belgian noble, was the mother-in-law of Napoleon's friend, General Mouton, of whom the Emperor said, "*Mon Mouton est un lion.*" Mme. d'Arberg was a woman of much talent and common sense, and she tried to influence her imperial mistress during Josephine's career as Empress and *divorcée.*

[2] Eugène and his sister afterwards erected a white marble monument to their mother's memory. Josephine is represented on her knees praying. The inscription is touchingly brief and expressive: "*A Joséphine, Eugène et Hortense.*"

[3] 2,000,000 francs: £80,000.

This sad business kept Eugène longer in France than he had expected. He sent one or two small souvenirs of his mother to his wife; they included a few trinkets and a lock of hair enclosed in a locket. For his children he sent some little black frocks trimmed with crape, as well as six embroidered dresses for his little sisters-in-law. He pensioned off all his mother's servitors, including a woman called "the good Mimi," whom Josephine had brought with her from Martinique when she married the *beau danseur*. This woman had also been Eugène's nurse. There was also a former *conventionnel,* a certain M. Bréval, who had been able to render valuable services to Mme. de Beauharnais during the Reign of Terror: Eugène took care to see that he was not forgotten. While staying with his sister at Saint-Leu, Eugène did his best to influence her to grant a very natural request which her husband had just made, namely: that he might be allowed to have the care of his eldest child. But Hortense had inherited her mother's obstinacy; she refused. Eugène might well say of her:

"Hortense, you are very good-natured, very kind-hearted, highly gifted; you possess all the virtues of your own sex and many of the qualities belonging to mine. . . . I should think you quite perfect if you did not sometimes strike me as being rather self-willed."

Before returning to Munich Eugène received a visit from his old friend, the comte de Lavalette, who, knowing his devotion to the unfortunate Emperor, had come to beg him to take care of a sum of 800,000 francs,[1] which he wished to send to his beloved master. Lavalette had had no news of the Emperor since the latter had landed on his rock-girt kingdom, where he guessed money was not too plentiful. This sum represented part of a treasure of 1,600,000 francs,[2] which Napoleon, before starting for his disastrous Russian campaign, had asked Lavalette to put in a safe place, ready for a rainy day. Lavalette had hit upon a very ingenious hiding-place. He had several boxes resembling books made; the gold was placed in these boxes, which were then arranged in rows on the upper shelves of Lavalette's bookcases.

Of course Eugène accepted the trust. However, he was not called upon to move in the matter until Elba had been exchanged for Saint Helena.

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[1] 800,000 francs: £32,000.

[2] 1,600,000 francs: £64,000.

CHAPTER XIV

Eugène returns to Munich—He goes to Vienna in the hope of receiving a position—The Eagle prepares to spread his wings again—The comet of the *Cent-Jours* flashes across the political horizon—Fifteen thousand veterans reply to the Emperor's call—Eugène, having given his word to remain passive, is unable to join his step-father—Eugène gets into trouble—He is offered the principality of Ponte-Corvo—He accepts part of the offer—Napoleon prepares for another fiasco—Waterloo—Napoleon looks his last upon France—Eugène tries to soften the fate of the prisoner on the island of Saint Helena—Eugène is able to succour some victims of the *Terreur blanche.*

AT last, on June 17th, 1814, Eugène was free to return to Augusta and the little ones. He spent the summer with his family, and only made a short visit to his sister, who, like her mother, was fond of cures, and was dosing herself and dabbling in politics at Baden. During that visit Eugène and Hortense had many long and private conversations together. What the subject of those conversations was nobody was ever able to discover, but it was probably not unconnected with a certain resurrection which, a few months later, proved to Europe that France had not forgotten her *petit caporal;* nay, more! that the Emperor Napoleon was still loved—and regretted.

As the allied sovereigns had decided that Eugène was to be present at the Congress of Vienna, he left Munich on September 25th, travelling to the Austrian capital by way of Salzburg, Leoben, Bruck and the Semmering Pass. On reaching Vienna, where he was lodged in the palace of Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen,[1] he received a fairly cordial welcome from the Emperor Francis I. He probably owed this fact to his father-in-law, who was also in Vienna at that time, and who certainly did his best for the ex-viceroy. But then was it not to his interest to do so? Royal families are costly luxuries, and Eugène and Augusta already had five children to provide for. Eugène had other friends, the above-named Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, Prince Esterhazy,[1] his old foe the Archduke Johann, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg,[2] the Count de Goës, and two foreigners with French names: the Prince de Rohan-Guémené[3] and the Prince de Ligne.[4] But Eugène's most powerful partisan was the Czar of Russia, an unfortunate fact, for Francis I of Austria was not friendly with his neighbour, and he showed his spite by trying to push Eugène, that neighbour's protégé, on one side. And then Eugène's *intransigeance* in the matter of honour was distasteful to Talleyrand and Metternich, who were all-powerful in those days.

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[1] *Saxe-Teschen,* Albert von (1738–1822): son of Augustus III, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, married Christina, daughter of Francis I of Austria, was made Governor of the Austrian possessions in the Netherlands. In 1792, after the insurrection of 1789, he besieged Lille, but was unsuccessful and unable to prevent the French obtaining possession of Belgium. He retired to Vienna in 1795, and passed the rest of his life as an amateur of art.

On December 31st, 1814, Eugène wrote the following letter to his Augusta. It might almost be called a love-letter, so full is it of tender solicitude for the wife who had helped him to bear the burden of the passing year:

"VIENNA, *December* 31*st*, 1814.

"My dear Augusta—We now stand on the threshold of another year. It is painful to be separated from one another at such a time when we love one another, but it is a consolation to think of our happy married life. I can say with pride and thankfulness that no one could have been more happy than I have been with you for the last eight years; and it will always be so, therefore I need not fear the flight of years. Our little ones are growing fast, they are the source of great pleasure to us, and are in good health. How many reasons we have to thank God for all the happiness which has fallen to our lot! . . ."

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[1] *von Esterhazy*, Nicolas (1765–1833): refused the crown of Hungary which the Emperor Napoleon offered him in 1809. He collected the celebrated pictures in the Gartenpalast in Vienna.

[2] *Saxe-Coburg*, Frederick Josias, duke of (1737–1815): served in the Austrian army during the first coalition against France in 1792, won the Battle of Nerwinde over Dumouriez (1793), and obliged the latter to evacuate Belgium. However, he was afterwards beaten by Moreau at Tourcoing and again at Fleurus by Jourdan, in consequence of which two defeats he left the army.

[3] A member of the Austrian branch of the Rohan-Guémené family.

[4] *de Ligne*, Charles, prince (1735–1814): entered the Austrian army at the age of seventeen, distinguished himself during the Seven Years' War; was sent on a mission to Russia where he became one of the Empress Catherine's numerous lovers; she gave him an estate in the Crimea and made him field-marshal. He died soon after making Eugène's acquaintance.

Several questions had to be settled at the Congress of Vienna : the question as to how little they could give Eugène was not one of the least difficult to decide. The Ionian Isles, containing 200,000 inhabitants, were mentioned—rather a poor exchange for the viceroyship of Italy.

In the middle of February, 1815, Metternich informed the Prince von Wrede, the King of Bavaria's representative, that his royal master *would offer no objections* to anything the King of Bavaria might wish to do for his son-in-law—which was a polite hint to the effect that Maximilian-Joseph had better look after his own family.

But there was one person who was plotting not only for his own future, but for Eugène's too, and that person was Napoleon, the proud eagle who, having found captivity irksome, was about to spread his wings and soar back to his aerie and—wonder of wonders !—find thousands to welcome him.

Fleury de Chaboulon, the secret messenger of the duc de Bassano, and one of the few who had remained faithful to the Emperor, tells us in his memoirs that, while in conversation with Napoleon during the latter's captivity on the Island of Elba, the Emperor said *à propos* of his return to France : " I would allow Italy to have the choice of independence or Eugène. Méjean and some other fellows did harm to his cause there. Nevertheless, the Italians love and esteem him very highly. He is made to be loved and esteemed, for he has shown us that he has a noble disposition."

And now began that most extraordinary wonder, the reign of the *Cent-Jours.*

The Emperor Alexander had read the character of Louis XVIII aright. To this obstinate, weak-minded king, and his clumsy efforts at governing, Napoleon owed not a few of the supporters whom he found to welcome him on returning to France.

But then Napoleon had never ceased to be the soldiers' hero. There is a quaint old song, a mixture of German and French, dating from the Napoleonic epoch, which is still to be found among collections of folk-songs on the Continent, and which, if my readers will forgive me, I will reproduce, as it, perhaps better than anything else, shows the spirit which reigned among the Emperor's *vieux grognards :*

"THE OLD WOODEN LEG.[1]

"In France was I born, in France was I bred,
The home of fair women and wine.
My name is Jean Grillon, *mesdames*,
My pride is my old wooden leg.
Tobacco, fresh air and potatoes
Are all that an old soldier asks.
And if on his breast he weareth the Cross
To his grave he will go with a smile.

"Think ye that I love not the fair sex?
Then are ye mistaken, forsooth!
The old wooden peg may go lamely,
But the lips are still ready to kiss.
I laugh and I sing and full often
Crack jokes with my old wooden leg.
My pegs may be worn out with service
But the top of me's lively as aye!

"So we hobble through life all undaunted,
Poor Jean and his old wooden leg.
Kings, emperors and princes are proud to house
Brave Jean and his old wooden leg.
When Death reads the roll-call of honour,
And the time comes to lay down my arms,
Saint Peter will utter the word of command:
'Make room for that old wooden leg!'"

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[1] "DIE 'ÖLZERNE BEIN.

"Ick bin ein Franzose, mes Dames!
Voll Muth wie Champagner Wein;
Jean Grillon das seind mein Name,
Mein Stolz sein die 'ölzerne Bein!
Luft, Wasser, un pommes de terre,
Mehr brauck ick nix lustick zu sein,
Der Plas wo ick steck und das Ehre
Des braven Soldaten is mein!

"Glaubt ihr dass ick Küsse nix gebe,
So trügt euch unendlicker Schein,
Man brauckt ja so wahr als ick lebe,
Zum Küsse die Maul, nix die Bein!
Ick scherze, ick singe, ick kose
Comme ça mit die 'ölzerne Bein;
Denn oberhalb bin ick Franzose,
Un wär' ick auck unten von Stein.

"So'inke ick fröhlick durk's Leben,
Comme ça mit die 'ölzerne Bein;
Un Kaiser un Könige geben mir Plas,
Ja, Plas für die 'ölzerne Bein!
Un sterb ick, un wär' es auck 'eute,
Marschier' ick zum Immelsthor ein,
Saint Pierre kommandirt dan:
Ihr Leute, mack's Plas für die 'ölzerne Bein!"

(Photo : Neurdein)

NAPOLEON LEAVES ELBA TO RETURN TO FRANCE (MARCH, 1815)

From the picture by Beaume

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Fifteen thousand veterans answered to the call of the people's Emperor and marched into Fontainebleau with him. As he advanced towards Paris, the people, growing more confident, joined his army in large numbers. The capital was entered without a single drop of blood being shed.

The scene enacted at the Tuileries, as recounted in Charles Bernard-Derosne's *Mémoires sur la Reine Hortense,* is worthy of reproduction :

" March 20th, 1815. The Emperor found many of his former ministers, generals and courtiers assembled at the Tuileries. They were all eager to see their old master. A huge crowd had gathered at the foot of the staircase and in the corridors of the imperial residence.

" The Emperor was lifted off his feet and borne above the heads of the thousands of spectators to his former apartments. Deafening cries of ' *Vive l'Empereur !* ' were heard on all sides.

" On entering his private apartments, the Emperor was received by Queen Julie, Joseph Bonaparte's wife, and by Hortense, who had at last left her hiding-place in order to come to the Tuileries and receive Napoleon.

" The Emperor bowed coldly to Hortense and asked after her sons' health in rather an off-hand manner, adding in a tone of reproach :

" ' You have placed my nephews in a false position by leaving them in the midst of my enemies ! '

" Hortense turned pale ; tears filled her eyes, but the Emperor did not seem to notice this fact.

" ' You have accepted kindness from the hands of my enemies,' Napoleon continued, ' and you are under obligations to the Bourbons. But I am counting upon Eugène. I hope he will soon be here. I have already written to him from Lyons.' . . ."

Alas ! on the first news of the Emperor's escape from Elba, the King of Bavaria had extracted a promise from his son-in-law that he would remain passive. The allied sovereigns' manifesto declaring Napoleon an outlaw was received with derision by his partisans, and was answered by an imperial manifesto, in which the Emperor said that he had been recalled to the throne by the entire French nation—which was rather an exaggeration, for Louis XVIII, the Bourbon, and the d'Orleans princelets—the latter always dogging the formers' steps, ready to snatch the kingdom out of their clutches—had rushed to the Belgian frontier in a most undignified hurry, and had not gone unaccompanied: there were too many nobles who owed their titles to the returning Emperor, and dreaded retribution, for that to be possible. The Empress of Austria was giving a fête in Vienna when the news that the Emperor had left his rock-bound kingdom and had returned to the people whom he had loved so well reached the Austrian capital. As Eugène happened not to be at this fête, his absence was interpreted as a proof of his complicity with the Emperor. The first intimation he received of the fact that his adoptive father had come to his own again was when, on returning to Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen's house at midnight, he found the palace surrounded by spies, placed there on his account. These precautions show that, although the Emperor and many another had found it in their hearts to doubt Eugène's fidelity, Austria, that Emperor's old and perhaps most bitter enemy, knew that he had not a truer friend than the ex-viceroy.

The news of Napoleon's return was an unpleasant surprise. Before three hours had elapsed, a meeting was called, to which emperors, kings, princes and dukes flocked as if the Emperor had already begun to invade their respective territories. Every diplomatist in Vienna attended the meeting ready to give an opinion. The Czar Alexander, panic-stricken, proposed that " severe measures " should be taken.

We learn from one of Eugène's letters to Augusta that he had received the great news with mingled feelings:

" VIENNA, *March 9th,* 1815.

" My good Augusta—Can you imagine anything more extraordinary than what has just happened? The Emperor has contrived to escape from the Island of Elba. Some say that he is going to France, others declare that he is about to join the King of Naples. Certainly nothing more disastrous could have happened to us. We were about to see our hopes realized; the Congress was drawing to a close; our fate and that of our children was about to be decided. Now matters will probably be concluded in a hurry, but I much fear that they will make the Emperor's escape an excuse to do nothing for me. They will take good care to remind one another of my devotion to the Emperor and of my efforts for his cause. Nobody will realize that it was my duty to serve him, and that I did so faithfully ; and that if it were my duty to do so to-day, I would do it faithfully, as I did before ; *but I will never fight against France.* The Emperor Alexander is the only person who understands me, and he knows me. . . . Yesterday he promised not to abandon me. If it is true that the Emperor has returned to France, my poor country will experience all the horrors of civil war. I tremble for her fate. . . ."

How we wish that Eugène had had the courage to break his promise to do nothing towards re-establishing his adoptive father on the throne of France ! As Eugène's next letters to his wife contain repeated assurances that he will not fight against his fatherland, we may conclude that he had been begged, and, perhaps as in 1814, bribes had been offered to him to turn traitor. Eugène's movements about this time were most carefully noted. Five police spies watched night and day outside the Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen's palace, followed him wherever he went, and even slept in a cab at the door, lest he should try and escape at night. At the very time when the allied sovereigns were outwardly most polite to Eugène, they were ordering fresh spies to watch his every movement. Not only were his letters confiscated and opened, but those of his wife and sister were subjected to the same treatment.

Augusta, in the beginning of April, rather imprudently gave permission to one of her French grooms to visit his relations in France. All went well until he was returning, when at Stuttgard he was arrested by the police on the plea of carrying secret despatches for Eugène. He was taken to Vienna, and the despatches, numbering five or six, were seized, copied and read to the assembled sovereigns. There were two letters from Hortense, in which the duchess de Saint-Leu made no secret of her delight at seeing the Emperor in his proper place again. We quote from one of these letters :

"My dear Eugène—You cannot imagine what enthusiasm the Emperor's return to France has aroused. I have just seen him. He received me very coldly. I think he disapproves of my having remained here (in Paris). He told me that he counted upon you, and that he had written to you from Lyons. Good God! I hope we shall not have another war! I do not think that the Emperor of Russia will take the offensive, for he much regretted the last war. I implore him to leave us in peace. Do you use your influence with him. By so doing you will serve the cause of humanity. I was obliged to hide for twelve days. Horrible calumnies had been circulated about me. Adieu. I am half-dead with fatigue."

In the second letter Hortense told Eugène that their step-father intended to bring Marie-Louise and the little King of Rome back to France, and that he was going to meet them at Strasburg. This letter, unfortunately, concluded with some unflattering remarks concerning the mental capacity of Eugène's protector, the Czar of Russia. She said, among other things, that he had no wit, no character, that it was easy to flatter him, and that she could twist him around her little finger. The other letters were from Lavalette, the chevalier Soulanges and Baron Darnay's brother. One and all expressed delight at the Emperor's return, and one and all wrote as if Eugène knew nothing about the matter. We can imagine the various expressions depicted upon the faces of the assembled sovereigns. Several Ministers loudly demanded that Eugène should be arrested. Alexander was most to be pitied, for after having been laughed at by the duchesse de Saint-Leu, whom he had gone out of his way to patronize, he was now blamed for protecting her brother. But nobody, and least of all an Emperor, likes to be told he is a simpleton. We are not surprised to learn that Alexander on the morrow sent the despatches *open* to Eugène, and said that he desired to have nothing more to do with either brother or sister.

One consequence of this incident was a rumour which said that Eugène and his unfortunate family were about to be imprisoned in a fortress in Austria or Hungary.

On receiving the despatches *open*, Eugène saw what had happened, and wrote to his protector, regretting that their friendship should have come to such an untimely end, saying that he wished to leave Vienna immediately, and that he had already asked for passports for himself and his father-in-law. He concluded by begging his friend to re-read the despatches, adding that if he did so he would see that Eugène did not know of Napoleon's return until it was an accomplished fact. Alexander took his advice and re-read the letters. A second reading showed him that Eugène had told the truth. He sent for him, and an affectionate interview took place, when Alexander confessed that he had been mistaken, and ended by embracing him and promising to continue to protect his interests. We do not know whether he ever forgave Hortense for her unkind remarks.

The Congress, notwithstanding its terror at the Ogre's return, made prodigious efforts to attend to the most pressing business. Eugène was offered the principality of Ponte-Corvo,[1] to which, should he accept it, more territory was to be added. But he was not even to have this principality unconditionally; he was only to reside there when agreeable to the Emperor of Austria. The Congress, to put a finishing touch to this generous offer, was so kind as to offer to "throw in" the half-ruined Castle of Bayreuth, whither Eugène could retire when the landlord of Ponte-Corvo, the Emperor of Austria, wanted his tenant out of the way.

Eugène was wise enough to accept the Castle of Bayreuth *without* the principality of Ponte-Corvo. It was his intention to wait there until something better should turn up.

At last, on April 7th, Eugène was allowed to return with his father-in-law to Munich, but not before he had again given his word of honour that he would neither go to France nor participate in any way in the final struggle which was about to take place.

The Emperor inaugurated his second tenancy at the Tuileries with several changes. He annulled the most inefficient of Louis XVIII's ordinances, dissolved the two Chambers, and named a new Ministry. Eleven months of confinement and reflection must have clipped the wings of his ambition, for he now declared that it was his intention to content himself with France's limits as settled by the Peace of Paris, and that he would establish his government on liberal lines.

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[1] Ponte-Corvo had been given to Bernadotte by Napoleon; the future King of Sweden had forfeited this little principality by his disloyal conduct in 1812.

He found time to go and breakfast one day at La Malmaison, where his first wife had breathed her last. While there he visited the very picture gallery in which was enacted the scene recounted by us in Chapter III. The pictures in this gallery had been taken by the Emperor from the different towns through which his troops had once marched victorious, and had been given to Josephine, who had bequeathed them to Eugène and Hortense.

A strange conversation concerning these pictures took place between the Emperor and M. Denon,[1] to whom had been entrusted the care of organizing the imperial picture galleries long ago, during the early days of the Empire.

"How much are these pictures worth?" asked the Emperor of M. Denon.

At the large sum mentioned by M. Denon, Napoleon uttered an exclamation of surprise:

"Are they worth as much as that? Ah! if I had known that they were so valuable, I would not have given them to Josephine. I am sorry they are not in the Louvre. We must buy them; they are quite fine enough to become national property."

The above conversation shows Napoleon in a very strange and very mean light.

By the fortunes of war, however, a few months later these pictures, on the second invasion of the capital by the Allies, were removed by the Czar's commands to his own lodging, notwithstanding the protests of the Elector of Cassel[2] (who declared he had more right to them), and purchased by him from Eugène and Hortense.

Napoleon bore Eugène no spite for not hurrying to welcome him back to his throne. And yet we ourselves would have gladly seen him there at the Tuileries, amid the little circle of servitors who had no cause to dread their master's return, and that crowd of obsequious courtiers who had suddenly remembered that they had never had a kinder master than the now once more successful Emperor. Did not Napoleon say in a letter written in May, 1817, from the Cape of Good Hope, that "his return from the Island of Elba was justified by the fact that the allied sovereigns, notwithstanding the clause contained in the Treaty of Fontainebleau, had not kept their promise to provide Prince Eugène with a suitable position such as a principality in Italy or Germany, but, at the instigation of the partisans of the Bourbon cause, had deliberately pushed him on one side"? So little spite, in fact, did Napoleon bear Eugène for holding aloof at a time when he needed as many brave fellows around him as possible, that in May he, in the hope of conciliating the allied sovereigns, actually thought seriously of abdicating in favour of Eugène, who would then have been made Regent. With this view in his mind, he charged M. Fleury de Chaboulon to sound the allied sovereigns as to their opinion. He gave as his reason:

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[1] *Denon,* Dominique Vivant, baron (1747–1825): was first chargé d'affaires at Naples, accompanied General Bonaparte to Egypt, became a celebrated antiquary. He was also a clever draughtsman; he it was who designed the column on the place Vendôme.

[2] *Hesse-Cassel,* Wilhelm IX, landgrave of (1743–1821): lost Saint-Goar and Rheinfels by the Treaty of Lunéville. He received the title of Elector in 1803, whereupon he took the name of Wilhelm I. His territory was invaded by French troops in 1806 in consequence of his disloyal behaviour, and his estates divided between Westphalia and the grand-duchy of Frankfort. He received them back in 1813–14 and kept the title of Elector.

"I should much like to know the allied sovereigns' opinion of Eugène, and whether they would feel disposed to place him at the head of affairs as Regent, supposing I were to perish on the battle-field."

M. de Chaboulon, therefore, had an interview with Metternich's representative, Baron Werner, when Napoleon's ambassador said:

"I only know one person, one soldier, who could be placed with safety at the head of the Government; that person is Eugène, the Prince who in 1814 said in a memorable proclamation: 'Only they are immortal who know how to live and die faithful to their vows and to their duty, faithful to gratitude and honour.' This Prince, far from aspiring to the throne, would, on the contrary, fight for it and thus shed glory on it. But perhaps his family ties and duties would prevent him leaving Bavaria; and then perhaps the allied sovereigns would not like the affairs of France to be confided to him? What do you think about the matter?"

But Werner had not played second fiddle to Metternich without learning some of the tricks of the trade. He contented himself with saying that "the question was so unexpected that he could not give an opinion either one way or the other."

One of Napoleon's last kind acts towards the members of his family was to make his four brothers, his uncle Cardinal Fesch, and his step-son Eugène, members of the new *Chambre des pairs*, which kind act was accomplished in June, only a few days before the final eclipse.

Few people were more crushed and grieved by the news of the disaster at Waterloo than Eugène was. That disaster was not unexpected.

What a bitter moment it was to Napoleon when, realizing that his star had set never to rise again, he courted death and found it not! Brave soldiers fell dead to the right of him, to the left of him; fell dead at his feet, behind his back. But, as he had once said in his *Blütezeit:* "The bullet which was to kill him had not been cast." With what an agony of remorse Napoleon remarked afterwards that "he seemed to bear a charmed life on that fatal day!"

Before leaving France for ever, the broken-hearted Emperor drove down to La Malmaison to bid adieu to that lovely spot where he and the wife of his youth had spent so many happy days. With his face distorted with grief, he paced up and down the gravel path of the *Avenue des Tilleuls* leading to the little arbour with its latticed windows wherein he had so often worked, amid a concert performed by the numerous feathered inhabitants of that garden of Eden; with the golden sunbeams weaving ever-changing arabesques on the path outside; and the warm summer breeze, sweet with the odours of those myriads of heavily scented flowers which the Creole preferred to all others, was wafted across the garden his Josephine had loved so well. And to-day those birds were as melodious, the sunbeams as bright, and the flowers as sweet as they had ever been in the dead past.

What were Napoleon's thoughts? May it never be our fate to think such thoughts! Did he see a graceful figure clad in fluttering muslin garments wandering along the mossy path leading to the *Templed'Amour?* No one dared to speak to him during that brief hour when he stood alone and saw the Past pass before his eyes as distinctly as he had stood and watched his Grand Army pass with waving banners and plumes on the *place du Carrousel,* and as he had once seen the smoke from burning Moscow roll across the horizon, and had shuddered at the sight. In such a moment, when we look Grief in the face, the dearest friend can do but little to assuage the pain ; but we wish that Eugène had been there.

And then the Emperor started for that other island which, if we believe some historians, was the most charming residence on the face of the globe, and possessed of an ideal climate ; indeed it would seem as if Napoleon ought to have considered himself a very lucky person to have such a pleasant shelter for his old age.

For the second time Alexander entered the French capital as a conqueror.

The French nation was now asking itself who would take the direction of affairs, and try to restore order in France. So high did Eugène stand in the people's esteem, that many would have liked to have seen him given an important position in the new Government. Though the cry of " We want no more Bourbons ! " was heard, not only in the poor quarters of Paris, but in some of the highest circles, the people were still too weak to get their way. History tells us how the Bourbons returned, and how long they managed to keep at the head of affairs.

The duc d'Orléans (later Louis-Philippe), true to the traditions of his house, was hovering about on the political horizon, ready to sacrifice himself and fly to the rescue of France, should he see the smallest loophole through which he could squeeze his uncrowned head. Eugène was sounded by him and asked whether he would give his support to the Bourbons' rival. Whereupon Eugène replied that all his influence would be placed at the disposal of his benefactor's son, the King of Rome.

Having disposed of Napoleon and facilitated Louis XVIII's return to his fatherland, the allied sovereigns found themselves at leisure to attend to other and less important business. However, when it came to the point of deciding where Eugène was to dwell, they, with one accord, discovered that they had not even so much as a square mile of territory of which to dispose. But on his father-in-law insisting that he should be given some dominions, no matter how small, it was decided that a principality numbering 50,000 souls should be offered to him in the kingdom of Naples. Perhaps the allied sovereigns dreaded lest Eugène should be attacked by the *folie des splendeurs* which had cursed his step-father's career, for the King of Bavaria was recommended to try and persuade Eugène not to accept the offer. Maximilian did so, promising to Eugène that if he would renounce the principality in Italy, he should receive the sum of twelve million francs[1] as an indemnity.

Since 1814 Eugène had allowed himself to be influenced by his wife and his father-in-law ; it was probably at his wife's advice that he accepted this indemnity, which was to be provided by the Papal States.

While the question was still being discussed, the Czar of Russia came to Munich and made the acquaintance of Augusta and her little ones.

Eugène's liberality, which was extended not only towards his exiled compatriots, but towards many Italian and Polish soldiers who had fought under the Imperial eagle, ought to have put the allied sovereigns to shame. Baron Darnay, who, as Eugène's secretary, knew pretty well everything his master did, affirms that he gave as much as one million francs[2] in charity in 1815, and sixty thousand francs[3] in the following year.

The Emperor Napoleon, we are told by historians, spent much of his time in his new prison in recounting and commenting upon his relations and former servitors' good deeds, qualities and failings. Of Marmont and Fouché, both of whom were inimical to Eugène, he said :

" The two men who helped to compass my downfall were Marmont, who, in 1814, deprived me of the army with which I was about to destroy the coalition in Paris ; and Fouché, who, in 1815, excited the Chamber against me. The real traitors, if I owed my downfall to anybody, were those two men."

Speaking of Josephine, he said :

" My poor Josephine ! . . . she had set her heart upon seeing me adopt Eugène, and that was the cause of all her disputes with my brothers and sisters. Never did she ask me anything for her son ; never, with that perfect tact for which she was so well known, did she thank me for what I did for him, so anxious was she to convince me that it was not to her interest but to mine to see that Eugène succeeded."

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[1] 12,000,000 francs : £480,000.

[2] 1,000,000 francs : £40,000.

[3] 60,000 francs : £2,400.

It is pleasant to hear that the Emperor valued Eugène as he deserved to be valued. Did not even stern old *Madame Mère,* whom no one can accuse of being partial to Josephine's belongings, say of the *adoptifs,* as she called them : " They showed their affection for the Emperor and their zeal for his cause in a very effectual manner " ?

" They put his own relations to shame ! " said others.

But the greatest praise Eugène ever earned from anybody was when the Emperor said, as he often did during those last miserable years :

" Eugène has never caused me a moment's sorrow ! "

Napoleon's downfall involved others besides himself ; all his nearest and dearest suffered more or less with him. Few were so lucky as Eugène, whose father-in-law continued to work for his interests. Hortense, for instance, found herself in a truly pitiable condition ; alone, with her two little boys, deprived through her own fault of her husband's protection, often in real want, she was driven from Paris and forced to seek shelter first in Germany, then in Italy and Switzerland. She showed her good feeling by refusing all her brother's offers of assistance, dreading lest she should injure his cause in Bavaria. And yet it would have been better for her, as the Bishop of Constance said, if she had allowed her brother to guide her in her future career.

The autumn of 1815 saw Eugène but little nearer obtaining the territory which had been promised to him. It speaks well for Eugène that Pius VII offered to help him obtain the indemnity which he was to receive for relinquishing his claim to a principality in Italy.

At last, in November, the foreign powers sent instructions to their representatives in Naples to carry out the agreement. Eugène, for his part, sent the comte Ré and Baron Bataille. The latter was to go to Milan and dispose of Eugène's personal belongings, such as they were, which he had been unable to take away with him, owing to his sudden departure. So much did Austria dread lest the Italians should wish to have their viceroy back again, that her representative had orders to buy up all the souvenirs of his brief sojourn in their midst.

At the time of Eugène's departure there was a sum of 2,700,000[1] francs in the Italian treasury, but he was never able to obtain so much as one *soldo* of this money. As for the indemnity, the payment of which was to extend over a long period, it dwindled, upon examination, in a miraculous manner and eventually shrunk to half its size, and that was all the protection of three such powerful persons as an Emperor, a King and a Pope was worth. Many victims of the *Terreur blanche* had cause to be grateful to Eugène. Among these was Lavalette, who, in consequence of his fidelity to his Emperor's cause and his efforts to prolong the *Cent-Jours*, had become an object of odium to the Bourbons. This excellent creature had already suffered for his devotion to the Emperor when that Emperor was exiled for the first time.

In the spring of 1816 he was lying in the Conciergerie under sentence of death for the rare crime of fidelity to a lost cause, when his wife, *née* Emilie de Beauharnais, whom my readers have already met, managed to obtain admittance to his cell. As soon as she found herself alone with her husband, she made him change clothes with her. Having left the prison thus disguised, Lavalette, with the aid of Sir R. Wilson [2] and two English officers, Messrs. Hutchinson and Bruce—all honour to their memory!—was able to escape over the French frontier.

There were many who rejoiced to learn that Lavalette had escaped the fate of Mouton-Duvernet;[3] the King of Bavaria, for instance, on learning that his son-in-law's friend had escaped, exclaimed :

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[1] 2,700,000 francs: £108,000.

[2] *Sir Robert Wilson* (1777–1849): began life as a solicitor, but soon left this occupation in order to go to Flanders as a volunteer. He saw service in Ireland, made the campaigns of Holland and Egypt, then visited Brazil with Baird, and was present at the capture of the Cape of Good Hope. He pursued his military career in Spain, Portugal, Germany and Russia, and won praise and honours for himself. His hatred for Napoleon did not prevent him succouring the Tyrant's faithful servitor. He became unpopular with a certain class in England in consequence of his behaviour at Queen Caroline's funeral; all his foreign orders were taken away from him and he lost his rank in the army. A public subscription, however, showed him that he was not without sympathizers; a few years later his rank and his orders were restored to him. A Member of Parliament for several years, he was finally given the post of Governor of Gibraltar.

[3] *Mouton-Duvernet*, Barthélemy, baron (1769–1816): fought bravely with Napoleon in Italy, Prussia, Poland and Spain. During the Restoration, he was made commander of Valence, but hastened to join the

" He can come to me ; I'll take care of him ! "

But the news of his evasion cannot have been so pleasant to the duchesse d'Angoulême,[1] who, when Mme. Lavalette, having with great difficulty obtained an audience, flung herself, half distracted with grief, at the feet of the woman who could not forget, and with tears and sobs prayed her to save her husband's life, had made a violent movement in order to get out of the poor creature's way, and had given her a look of indescribable hatred.

On the escape of Lavalette being discovered, Mme. Lavalette and her little girl's governess, who had helped to rescue her pupil's father, were arrested, together with Sir R. Wilson and Messrs. Hutchinson and Bruce. The two ladies were afterwards acquitted. Mr. Bruce was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. But the strain endured by Mme. Lavalette while saving her husband's life was too much for that noble woman, and her reason gave way. She never recovered her senses.

M. and Mme. Lavalette enjoyed much popularity in England, where their portraits were sold in the streets. Hutchinson's father was so proud of his son's share in Lavalette's escape that he left him £80,000 in his will.

At the King of Bavaria's request Lavalette went to Munich ; but fearing that he should not be in safety in such a big town, he, at Eugène's recommendation, went to Starnberg on the Würmsee, about seven leagues from Munich. Twice a week Eugène came to see him in his hiding-place, a gamekeeper's hut, and bring him newspapers and books. The Bourbon spies, however, seem to have been quite as clever as Napoleon's spies, for they soon discovered that Lavalette was in Bavaria, and they ordered the king to give

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Emperor during the *Cent-Jours*. He proposed after Waterloo that the King of Rome should be proclaimed Emperor. On the return of Louis XVIII he was arrested, condemned to death and shot.

[1] *d'Angoulême*, Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte (1778–1851) : known as the Prisoner of the Temple. Having been released after seeing her parents, brother and aunt fall victims of the Revolution, she joined her uncle, Louis XVIII, at Mittau. Her marriage to her cousin was unproductive of happiness to either party. Her struggles for her family's cause drew forth the famous remark from Napoleon : " She is the only man of her family." After 1830 she accompanied her relations to Frohsdorf, where she devoted herself to the education of her fatherless nephew, the duc de Bordeaux.

him up. Maximilian swore that the escaped man was not in Munich, and at the same time sent word to his guest to move farther away. Lavalette, therefore, took refuge in a gardener's cottage, situated about one league distant from the king's summer residence, Schloss Berg, later the scene of the tragedy with which Ludwig II of Bavaria[1] ended his life.

In the month of July, 1816, the King of Bavaria came with his whole family, including Eugène and his family, to spend the summer at this castle, when Lavalette was able to pass nearly all his time with his friend, only returning to the gardener's cottage at night, lest he should be surprised. But Lavalette was to have one alarm. The very day of his departure for the gardener's cottage, two French officers asked to be admitted to Eugène's guard of honour. Thinking that they were spies, Eugène refused to see them, saying that he "had no guard of honour, and that they had better go and find other dupes than him." The two officers, two brothers, MM. Bacheville, furious at this reception, returned to Munich and complained of Eugène's behaviour. The latter was overcome with remorse for his brusqueness, when it was proved that his two compatriots were not spies, but that they, like Lavalette, had been condemned to death, and had managed to escape. He afterwards sent them a considerable sum of money.

Lavalette left the Würmsee in August, and went to stay with Hortense at Augsburg, whither her brother and his father-in-law had persuaded her to go.

Lavalette often spoke with gratitude of Eugène's kindness to him, and said that, had he been his own brother, he could not have been kinder to him. And he was not the only person who had cause to be grateful to Eugène. Both Josephine's children were so well known for their charity to French fugitives that they were more than once imposed upon by adventurers. When Mouton-Duvernet, for instance, was lying in prison waiting to be executed, Hortense and her brother were begged to provide a sum of 20,000 francs,[2] on receipt of which the jailer of the unfortunate Mouton-

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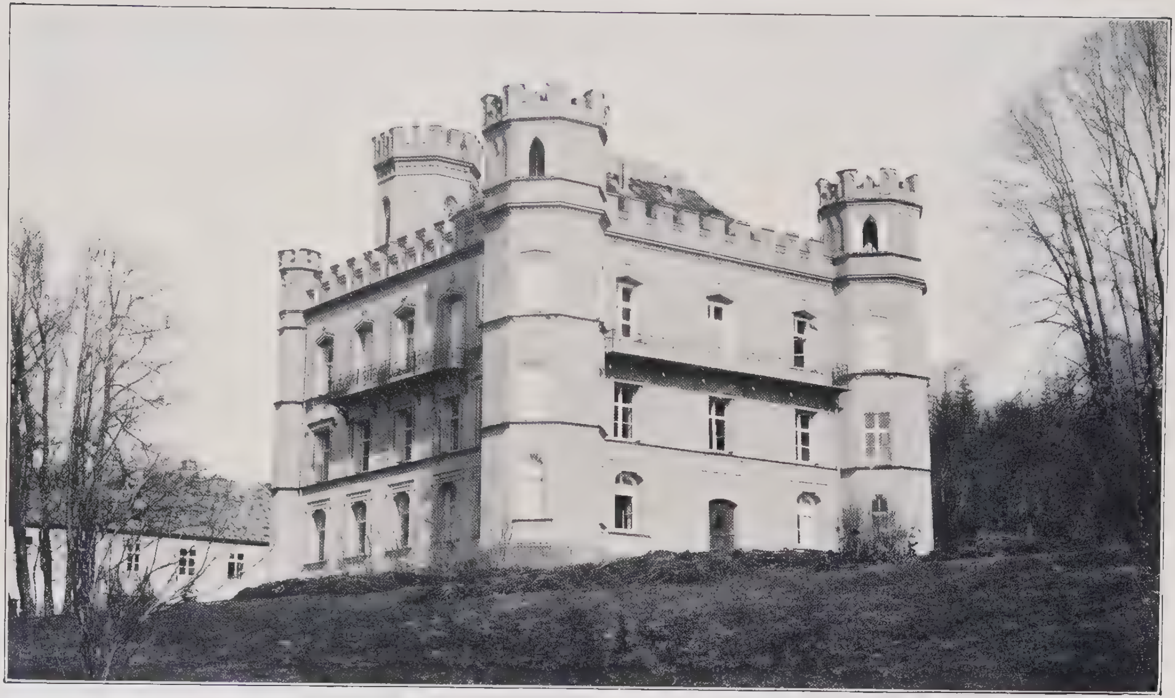
[1] *Ludwig II*, Otto Friedrich Wilhelm (1845–86): supported Austria against Prussia in 1866, but was forced to recognize the German Empire in 1871. His failing health made him an easy prey to certain intriguers who drained his purse and eventually drove him to kill himself and his keeper.

[2] 20,000 francs: £800.



(Photo : Stuffler, Munich)

SCHLOSS BERG

The summer residence of Maximilian-Joseph of Bavaria

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Duvernet promised to open the prison door and shut his eyes to what might follow. The money was produced, but it never reached the person for whom it was destined, and so the prisoner was shot.

On another occasion a clever count invented a heart-rending story of imprisonment and cruelty, and was within an inch of obtaining a large sum of money; however, Hortense and her brother were warned in time.

Not only did Eugène honour living heroes, but the dead were not forgotten. To La Tour d'Auvergne,[1] called by Napoleon *le Premier Grenadier de France*, a descendant of another hero, Turenne,[2] who refused to accept any rewards for his whole-hearted service, Eugène erected a monument on the battle-field of Neuburg in Bavaria where, in 1800, that true son of France fought his last battle. Napoleon, then at his apogee, had ordered the faithful heart to be extracted from the corpse and borne in a silver medallion on the shoulder-belt of the oldest soldier in La Tour d'Auvergne's regiment, who, when the muster roll was read, had to answer, "*Mort au champ d'honneur!*" when the name of his brave brother in arms was called. This custom was kept up until the return of the Bourbons. It was lately revived, when a dramatic scene was enacted in the courtyard of the old *hôtel des Invalides*, Paris. The general commanding the regiment, having called the name "La Tour d'Auvergne!" the answer flashed out from the ranks like a call to battle and a cry of victory: "*Mort au champ d'honneur!*"

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[1] *La Tour d'Auvergne*, Théodore Malo Corret de (1745–1800): commanded a corps of grenadiers known as *the Infernal Column;* not only was he a distinguished soldier, but he was also the author of several learned works, and he spoke nearly all the European languages.

[2] *Turenne*, Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, vicomte de (1611–75): the first tactician of his time.

CHAPTER XV

Hortense and her brother exchange visits—Eugène's kindness to his wife's sister—He receives the little State of Eichstätt—Birth of his second son—He intercedes for the Prisoner of Saint Helena—Napoleon's opinion of his adopted son—Lord Kinnaird is sent to Munich—Death of Eugène's benefactor—His grief—Prince Oscar of Sweden begs for the hand of the Princess Josephine—Eugène's illness—His daughter marries—Eugène dies in Augusta's arms.

DURING the summer of 1816 Eugène persuaded his sister to spend some weeks with him at Schloss Berg. Augusta, who had lately borne her husband another little daughter,[1] a fair flower which, alas ! had scarcely opened its blue eyes before it closed them again, was feeling very sad. Hortense could sympathize with her sister-in-law, for had she not also known what it means to lose a child ?

Hortense's little boys were shy at first, but they soon made friends with their cousins. So happy were the hours passed by the future Napoleon III on the shores of the lovely Würmsee that he, in after years, used to say that they were the happiest in his childhood. Eugène's family now consisted of Josephine, known in her babyhood as the Princess of Bologna, now a lively girl of nine who resembled little Letizia Murat,[2] Caroline Murat's eldest daughter, in a most remarkable degree ; Hortense, aged eight ; Auguste, aged six ; Amélie, aged five ; and the siege-baby Théodolinde, who was still almost a toddler.

Mlle. Cochelet calls Eugène's little family a veritable nest of cupids ; they certainly make a charming picture. Eugène considered his youngest little girl very like what her aunt had been at the same age. On the occasion of Hortense's first visit to Schloss Berg he placed the pink and white baby in his sister's lap, saying :

" There, that's for you ! I think she is extraordinarily like what you used to be at her age."

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[1] This little child, which only lived five months, was baptized Caroline-Clotilde-Eugénie.

[2] Letizia Murat married the marquis Pepoli.

At these words poor Augusta's eyes filled with tears, for she remembered the little one who had taken but one peep at this wonderful world and had then slipped away from its mother's arms.

Eugène and his wife returned Hortense's visit when the latter was at Constance. Eugène, in his wisdom, had determined to cut his coat according to his cloth, and, while waiting for better days, had reduced his household to an extent which scandalized some of his wife's relations. On this particular occasion, Augusta travelled without a single lady-in-waiting. We may be sure that Eugène enjoyed the journey all the more for this fact ; but the Baroness von Wurmbs, who was left behind and who perhaps would have enjoyed the change, was loud in her condemnation of such unwonted behaviour.

" Good gracious ! " cried she, " a princess of the Bavarian royal family has never before been seen travelling like a shopkeeper's wife ! "

However, Eugène saw no harm, and told his wife's lady-in-waiting so ; for some time the good baroness had to endure not a little teasing on his part.

But the Baroness von Wurmbs was not the only person who was scandalized by Eugène and Hortense's hatred of ceremony and love of fun.

During Augusta's visit to her sister-in-law at Constance the latter introduced her to the celebrated Baroness von Krüdener,[1] a latter-day saint, who believed that she had been sent by Providence to regenerate mankind. This wonderful female was taken into the presence of the Princess Augusta ; instead of waiting to be presented to the Princess as Court etiquette requires, the baroness made no attempt to courtesy, but took up a position in the middle of the room, extended her arms and turned her eyes up to the ceiling ; she then began a long rigmarole in which she exhorted her hostesses to bear with resignation the great misfortunes which were still in store for the Emperor's family. Augusta, thoroughly taken aback, sat with her mouth open, not knowing whether to laugh or to cry ; while Eugène, convinced that his sister's visitor was an escaped lunatic, began to wonder how he could persuade her to go quietly. As for Hortense, who thoroughly enjoyed the situation, she was obliged to beat a sudden retreat in order to hide her laughter and thereby scandalized poor Mlle. Cochelet as she had never been scandalized before.

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[1] *von Krüdener*, Juliane von Vietinghof, baroness (1766–1828): a Russian visionary who began her career by running away from her husband and going to live at Montpellier in France. After several amorous adventures she, as middle age came on, took to religion and travelled all over Europe trying to convert people to her way of thinking. She obtained great influence over the Emperor Alexander of Russia.

Eugène was also very good to his wife's family. Augusta's eldest sister Charlotte had made a very unhappy marriage with the Crown Prince of Würtemberg,[1] who had refused to live with her and eventually divorced her. It had been a cause of deep regret to Eugène that he had no Court to which to invite his sister-in-law, but he had said to comfort her :

" When I obtain the principality which has been promised to me, you shall come and live with us ! "

However, when Charlotte married the Emperor of Austria, in 1817, she showed Eugène that she had not forgotten his kindness to her, for she invited him and his wife to her wedding, when, we may be sure, he was not slighted as he had been at the Tuileries when the de Beauharnais had had to go to the wall to make room for the Hapsburg.

Eugène was fond of his brothers-in-law, but Charles, Augusta's youngest brother, was his favourite.

It was during the winter of 1816–17 that Eugène, while driving in a sleigh, was thrown out and fell upon his head ; a tumour is supposed to have formed in consequence of this fall and to have led to the illness which eventually caused his death. However, as he did not suffer much pain at the time he thought no more about the matter.

In 1817 Eugène stood sponsor to his nephew, the future Emperor of the French, when the boy made his first communion at Augsburg and received the blessing of the venerable bishop of that diocese.

The King of Bavaria, realizing that nobody wished to do anything for his son-in-law, tried to console him by telling him to choose some State or principality in Bavaria. Eugène, misled (as it afterwards transpired) as to its value, chose the little State of Eichstätt, with about 7000 inhabitants, which

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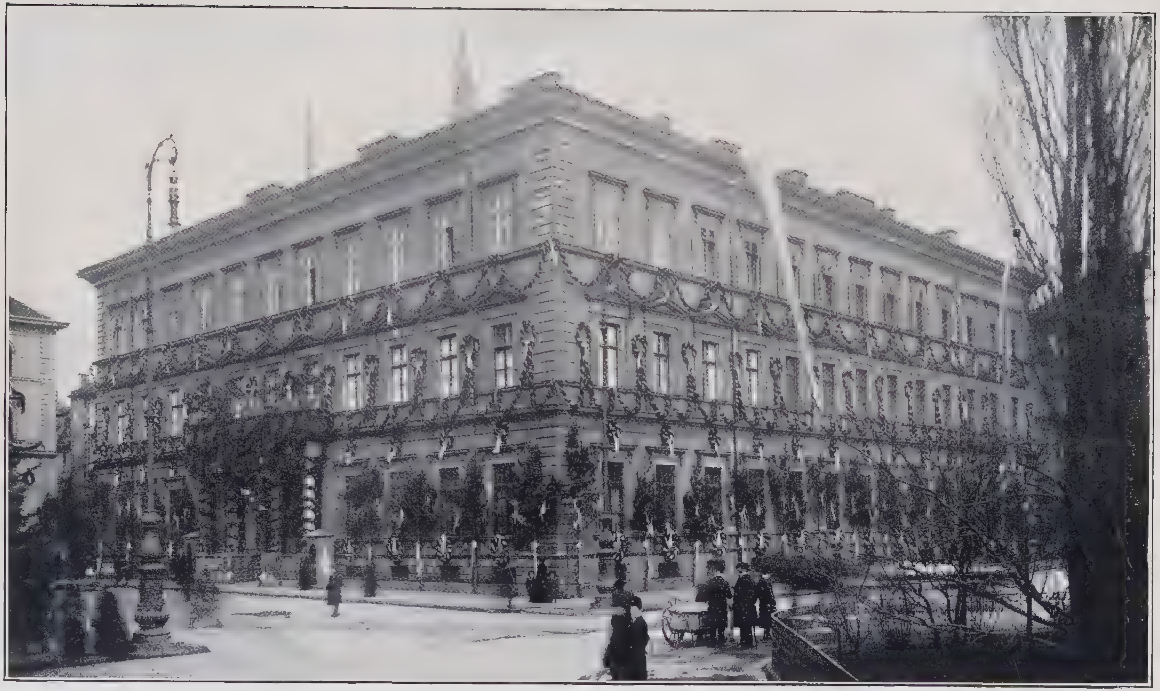
[1] *William I*, king of Würtemberg (1781–1864) : reigned from 1816 until 1864.



(Photo : Stuffler, Munich)

THE LUITPOLD PALACE, MUNICH

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his father-in-law had obtained by the Treaty of Presburg in 1805. This State, which possessed a castle in good repair and excellent hunting, was afterwards made into a principality for its owner.

The Emperor Alexander still seems to have displayed some interest in Eugène's fate, for we find a letter written by him in April, 1817, in which he hopes that Eugène will soon be given a suitable position. The ex-viceroy had certainly been obliged to exercise patience. With the State of Eichstätt he also received the title of Duke of Leuchtenberg, while his children were given the title of Serene Highness, and he himself was allowed to be termed Royal Highness, and, what was more important, he was promised the crown of Bavaria supposing his brothers-in-law left no male issue. About this same time Eugène was given command of the 6th regiment of the Bavarian cavalry. With his improved circumstances, Eugène was able to purchase land in Munich and build himself the building known as the Luitpold Palace.

The Bourbons had returned to France, but peace had not accompanied them ; there were too many parties clamouring and struggling for supremacy. We learn from M. Gilbert Stenger's work upon the princesse de la Trémoïlle that Eugène, although far away, was still remembered with esteem in France. The princesse de la Trémoïlle wrote to Hyde de Neuveville[1] in 1817 :

" The national guards, under the command of the comte de Montsoreau, M. de Blacas'[2] father-in-law, have been discharged. Since the departure of Blacas everything has been done to disturb the King's household, alter it and reduce it. People talk of Eugène de Beauharnais being made Regent for the son of the usurper ; they even talk of applying to a prince belonging to an European royal family supposing the Bourbons are again driven from France. . . ."

Eugène now became a father for the seventh time, for his youngest child, a boy, was born on October 2nd, 1817, and baptized Maximilian, after his maternal grandfather. Eugène was still far from realizing Napoleon's prophecy that " when one begins with a girl, one always has at least twelve children." But perhaps he was content.

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[1] *Hyde de Neuveville*, Jean-Guillaume, baron (–1857) : a zealous partisan of the Bourbon cause. After the *coup d'état* of the 18th *fructidor*, he emigrated to England, and later to America. He returned to his native land with Louis XVIII, who entrusted to him various confidential missions in England, Italy and America.

[2] *Blacas d'Aulps*, Casimir, duc de (1770–1839) : was made Secretary of State by Louis XVIII in 1814. He accompanied his royal master on his trip to Ghent, was made Ambassador at Naples, where he negotiated the marriage of the daughter of Francis I, king of the Two Sicilies, to the duc de Berry. He went into exile with the Bourbons in 1830.

In the following year rumours reached the Emperor's family that he was being subjected to much petty tyranny, some said harsh treatment, at the hands of Hudson Lowe.[1] Eugène has been blamed for not having accompanied his adoptive father to the wind-swept island of Saint Helena. But we must not forget that Eugène, by the marriage which the Emperor had made for him, had contracted new ties ; his six little ones were perhaps sufficient excuse to prevent him leaving Europe. But nobody suffered more than Eugène on learning of this sad state of affairs. In his despair at his inability to do anything for his beloved step-father, he bethought himself of that other benefactor from whom, however, he had received nothing but fair words. To the Czar of Russia he therefore wrote :

" Sire—Newspapers published in *several* countries declare that the Emperor Napoleon is deprived of the means of obtaining the necessaries of life, and that his health is giving way owing to the privations to which he is subjected. I am sure that, supposing these rumours be true, it is not Your Majesty's intention that he should be subjected to such severity.

" In my present painful position, Sire, I feel it my duty to call Your Majesty's attention to the fate of him who was once my mother's husband, who loaded me with favours and who instructed me in the art of governing and in the military profession. Far be it from me to ask you to do anything which might compromise the peace of Europe ; but there are doubtless many ways by which the interests of Europe and the interests of humanity might be combined ; I am sure Your Majesty will know what to do in the matter. . . ."

We find in the diary of the Queen of Westphalia[2] that both the *adoptifs* were doing their best to obtain a relaxation of the severity of which their step-father was a victim :

" Monday, May 25th, 1818. Hortense told me that the comte de Las Cases[1] wished to come and see her at Augsburg, as well as the viceroy, but that they had advised him not to come lest by so doing he should make people suspicious. Prince Eugène recommended her to propose to have an interview with the comte de Las Cases at Baden, where he has to go during the month of July. She also spoke to me of a petition in favour of the Emperor which she and her brother wish to send to the Congress ; this petition is to be drawn up in Rome ; it is only to contain reference to the ways and means of mitigating the Emperor's sufferings and sending him articles which he requires, such as books, clothing, etc. etc. In the petition we also ought to insist that Sir Hudson Lowe be recalled from Saint Helena ; but, above all, we must be careful not to mention politics either directly or indirectly. This petition should be addressed by *Madame* (Mère) to the confederate sovereigns and signed by all the members of the family. Hortense proposes to mention this petition when she goes to drink the waters at Lucca. She hopes that she will be able to obtain passports without any trouble. She is certain of getting this proposal to Rome, for she will send her youngest son to King Louis, while her eldest son will stay with her during her cure. Hortense and I have fixed upon a sign in order to be able to write to one another upon this subject. She is to tell me *if she is doing the drawing which she promised to do for me and which I hope she will soon send me.* She thinks that we shall be able to see that this petition reaches the persons for whom it is intended ; but we must first get it written. I pleaded the wrong side in order to get at the right, for I said to Hortense that the viceroy's present position would prevent him signing this petition. 'You are mistaken,' said she to me. 'Eugène would be deeply wounded if the family did not allow him to sign it. I assure you that he is devoted, heart and soul, to our cause. He is obliged to be prudent. The King (of Bavaria) is his only friend, and I much doubt whether he will remain in Munich after his father-in-law's death. However, Prince Charles likes him; but when the King is gone he will not be able to do much for Eugène.' . . ."

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[1] *Hudson Lowe* (1770–1844).

[2] Jérôme, the king of Westphalia's second wife was Catherine of Würtemberg.

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[1] *Las Cases*, Dieudonné, comte de (1766–1842): having joined the army of Condé, returned to France after the 18th *Brumaire*. When Flushing was threatened by the English, Las Cases offered his services to his country, and thus won the esteem of Napoleon, who made him his chamberlain. He accompanied the Emperor to Saint Helena, and remained there until Hudson Lowe sent him to the Cape of Good Hope. He was elected deputy for the Seine in 1830.

When Eugène and the Emperor Alexander met at Mergentheim, near Weimar, in the autumn of this same year (1818), the former spent the five or six hours of this interview begging the latter to do something to alleviate his step-father's sufferings. Alexander made some vague promises—promises cost nothing—and then they parted, never to meet again.

In the following year, Eugène, at Napoleon's request and with the consent of the Emperor's jailers, began to send him every month the sum of 20,000 francs,[1] being part of the deposit of 800,000 francs[2] which he had received from Lavalette.

It is touching to think that the fallen Emperor's one desire during that long decline—while he watched his body decaying with a stoicism, resignation or indifference, call it as you will, worthy of the ancient Romans or the worshippers of Mahomet and Buddha—was to have a portrait of the child of the woman who had been made to marry him against her will and who was now taking her revenge in her own way. This desire Eugène, the tenderest of fathers, and therefore able to sympathize with his step-father, determined to satisfy. With great difficulty he succeeded in obtaining a little bust of the King of Rome, which he concealed in a packing-case full of books, and so the Emperor got his wish. Dr. Antommarchi[3] tells us how the Emperor, with tears rolling down his cheeks, caressed the curly head as if it would waken into warm life at his fond touch.

Eugène spent the next few years attending to his children's education. He wisely refused an invitation to visit the Court of Alexander; it was his intention to pass the rest of his days in retirement.

It was during the winter of 1819–20 that Eugène received a letter which came as an echo of the old Court life and its intrigues, with which he hoped to have done for ever. It contained an announcement that somebody in Paris had written a life of Eugène in which he was accused of all sorts of mean tricks ; it likewise contained a mangled account of those little blunders and small faults of which we are all guilty at some time or the other in our lives, and which, in this case, were distorted beyond recognition. To prevent the publication of this libel, Eugène was requested to pay 6000 francs.[1] He showed the letter to General de Vaudoncourt,[2] who was staying with him, and asked him his opinion.

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[1] 20,000 francs: £800.

[2] 800,000 francs: £32,000.

[3] *Antommarchi*, Charles François (1780–1838): professor of anatomy at Florence, was chosen to tend Napoleon during his last illness. He was the author of an interesting work, *Les Derniers Moments de Napoléon*.

" Keep your money ! " answered the cool-headed soldier. " Let them print it. You have nothing to fear from history. Allow me to remark that if you show any signs of weakness you will have to give up every bit of your fortune, for the author is determined to make a good thing out of the manuscript, which will probably have a tremendous success if it is published."

Eugène followed General de Vaudoncourt's advice.

It is difficult to say if this particular book was ever published ; perhaps it was one of two works entitled *Dernière campagne de l'Armée franco-italienne*, by the Chevalier S. J.——, and *Mémoires sur la cour du prince Eugène et sur le royaume d'Italie*, by the sub-prefect of Ravenna, which appeared in the following year.

During a conversation held in 1820 with one of the few faithful friends who had gone into exile with him, the Emperor spoke of his love for Josephine, declared that he had never loved anybody as he had loved her, and that he was convinced that he had been even dearer to her than her own children. He added :

" Eugène proved himself to be a clever general and a competent ruler. My Italian subjects did justice to his good qualities ; the French nation loved him and was grieved to see him excluded from the throne of France. His mother often urged me to adopt him as my heir ; it was a fixed idea with her. . . . But, supposing Eugène had succeeded me, I should not have founded a dynasty ; for adoption, all said and done, is only a fiction and would have been distasteful to anyone with any common sense ; the blood of the fourth dynasty would have been that of the de Beauharnais and not that of Napoleon ! ”

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[1] 6,000 francs : £240.

[2] *Vaudoncourt*, Frédéric-François, baron de (1772–1845): born in Austria of French parents, one of Napoleon's most faithful servitors; served during the wars of the Republic and the Empire, was condemned to death by default in 1815 for having joined Napoleon during the *Cent-Jours*. He was not able to return to France until 1825.

Eugène now had another reminder that France was still the scene of plots and disturbances when, in the spring of 1821, Lord Kinnaird appeared at Munich and asked him to grant him an audience. During the interview which eventually took place Lord Kinnaird informed Eugène that he had been commissioned by the duc d’Orléans (later Louis-Philippe) to ask him to join his patron in an effort to rid France of the disturbances with which she was again threatened ; Lord Kinnaird added that the successful party was to bind himself to protect the unsuccessful party and to allow him to reside in France. We can imagine what treatment Eugène, supposing he had been unsuccessful, or even successful, would have experienced at Louis-Philippe’s hands.

Eugène’s reply varied in no way to his reply to a former request of the same nature from the same person :

“ Were it for the happiness of France, I would willingly join forces with the duc d’Orléans, my father’s friend ; but I must warn him that if I were to be successful, I should immediately bring Napoleon’s son back to France. I should be guilty of gross treachery if I accepted the first place. Should Fate decide otherwise, I should content myself with serving France as a humble citizen.”

Napoleon’s life was ebbing away. The story of his last moments, as related by Dr. Antommarchi, is painful to the extreme, for he remained a great man to the last. On April 24th, 1821, only a few days before the end, he signed his will, on which occasion he said :

“ May my son never ascend the throne with the assistance of any foreigner. . . . Let him go to my family whenever he has an opportunity to do so. My mother is a woman of the old school ; Joseph and Eugène can both give him advice. . . .”

So we see that Eugène still stood very high in the Emperor’s opinion, so high, indeed, that Napoleon even gave him precedence of his own brothers in his will.

A codicil made by the Emperor, who was in ignorance of many of the moves which had been made since his removal from the political chess-board, was destined to cause his adopted son considerable trouble, as we shall see later on.

The day before his death the Emperor wrote the following lines :

" I thank my good and excellent mother, Cardinal Fesch, my brothers Joseph, Lucien and Jérôme, and Pauline, Caroline, Julie, Hortense, Catherine and Eugène for all their kindness to me. . . ."

Surely more than one of the persons named above must have felt remorse on reading that last message ?

On May 5th, 1821, Death released Napoleon the Great from his prison and stilled the leonine heart which had once throbbed with generous plans for the welfare of France.

The last word which fell from his lips was *Armée ;* his last thought must have been for his *enfants*, for, even in the throes of death, he seemed to the watchers round his bed to be striving to lead his men on to victory.

A terrific storm came up over the horizon just before the Emperor breathed his last sigh. The island was swept by wind, sand and surf ; bushes were rooted up ; slates were torn off houses. And when the storm passed, it took with it the soul of a great man.

Many of Napoleon's *grognards* refused to believe that he was dead. " 'Tis another lie ! " they said ; *" n'est il pas vrai, mon Dieu, qu'il n'est pas mort ? "*

The people's poet, Béranger, speaks thus :

" On parlera de sa gloire
Sous le chaume bien longtemps.
Bien, dit-on, qu'il nous ait nui,
Le peuple encore le révère,
Oui, le révère.
Parlez-nous de lui, grand'mère,
Parlez-nous de lui ! "[1]

Eugène did not hear of the death of his benefactor until May 21st ; he and his wife mourned the departed hero as truly as any of his own blood relations. With what emotion did he receive a magnificent gilt candlestick which had been used by Napoleon during the last months of his life, when tortured and unable to find rest in any position owing to that most horrible of maladies—cancer, he had tried to while away some of the long, dreary hours of night by reading of other and happier victors on life's battle-field.

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[1] *Souvenirs du Peuple.*

On August 15th, Napoleon's birthday, Eugène had a mass celebrated at Ismaning, his country residence near Munich, at which he and his whole family, clad in deep mourning, assisted.

He now collected all his souvenirs of the dead step-father, all the little presents that step-father had ever given him, together with the splendid uniforms and arms dating from France's apogee, and the tent of Mourad Bey, to whose wife Eugène had once shown courtesy, and placed them in a room in the Luitpold Palace, which in future was known as the *Cabinet des Souvenirs.*

Eugène's life was similar to that led by many petty princes of the time and was necessarily rather quiet owing to his small fortune. His palace was chiefly remarkable for a collection of works of art by Rubens, Canova, van Dyck, Murillo, Velasquez, Teniers and Rembrandt, which he probably owed to his adoptive father's generosity—and victories. Eugène still enjoyed much esteem among the European sovereigns ; we can take it that the proposal for the hand of the Princess Josephine, known in her babyhood as the Princess of Bologna, which proposal was made by Prince Oscar of Sweden[1] in 1822, was prompted by such a feeling. However, Josephine was only fifteen years of age at that time, far too young to make a *mariage de convenance,* of which Eugène, notwithstanding his own good fortune, had a wholesome dread ; besides which, Josephine would have had to change her religion. Nevertheless, the young prince and his mother were invited to spend the summer months at Eichstätt, and here the young people, while wandering through forest and field, learnt to know and love one another. Many fêtes were given in honour of Prince Oscar, who afterwards went with his future father-in-law to make the acquaintance of Hortense at Arenenberg.

It was in this same year that the comte de Montholon[2] brought a lawsuit against Eugène for which the Emperor Napoleon was partly responsible. In the codicil, dated April 24th, 1821, Napoleon said :

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[1] *Oscar,* king of Norway and Sweden (1799–1859) : succeeded his father in 1844. His reign was distinguished by wise reforms and innovations.

[2] *Montholon,* Charles Tristan, comte de (1783–1853) : first entered the French navy, but later became a soldier, when he made himself useful to Napoleon on the 18th *Brumaire.* He fought in Italy, Austria and Russia, and was wounded several times. Faithful to the fallen Emperor, he accompanied him to Saint Helena and received his last sigh. He continued faithful to the Bonaparte cause, landed with Napoleon III at Boulogne, and shared his imprisonment in the castle of Ham.

> " I leave to my very faithful servitors everything belonging to me in Italy, such as jewels, plate, linen, furniture, horses, of which the viceroy is the trustee, and which are my property, together with the sum of 2,000,000 francs.[1] I hope that my son Eugène-Napoleon will execute my wishes faithfully, and that he will not forget the dotation of 40,000,000 francs[2] which I gave him, as well as his share of his mother's fortune, while he was in Italy. I bequeath 200,000 francs[3] to the comte de Montholon, . . ." etc.
>
> " This codicil is entirely written with my own hand and sealed with my arms.
>
> " NAPOLEON."

The words : " I bequeath 200,000 francs to the comte de Montholon " was made the subject of a lawsuit ; for Eugène had left Italy as poor a man as when he went there.

When writing the above codicil, Napoleon was unaware what position Eugène now occupied. The valuable possessions of which he speaks had never belonged to Eugène. He had only had the use of them as viceroy ; and, as we have already seen, they were left behind in Italy and sold to Austria, who, however, never paid for them. Napoleon speaks of a dotation of 40,000,000 francs. Now Eugène never received more than half that sum, and in 1814 that half was confiscated by the Pope. Again, the sum of 2,000,000 francs represented by La Malmaison, which property was bequeathed to him by his mother, had had to be used after her death towards paying her debts, which exceeded that sum.

As for the money in the treasury at the time of Eugène's departure from Italy, that had been confiscated by Austria. So we see that Eugène's fortune was represented by the principality of Eichstätt, which he owed to his father-in-law's liberality.

Eugène had already recommended the comte de Montholon to join him in urging Austria to surrender that portion of

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[1] 2,000,000 francs : £80,000.
[2] 40,000,000 francs : £1,600,000.
[3] 200,000 francs : £8,000.

Napoleon's property which she had confiscated. However, the comte de Montholon preferred to prosecute Eugène. Death removed the defendant before any result was obtained, and the comte de Montholon continued litigation with Eugène's heirs until 1850, but without any success.

Eugène has been severely criticized for not carrying out this clause of his step-father's will, but we ourselves are more inclined to blame him for marrying his daughter to the son of Napoleon's enemy, Bernadotte.[1] It has been pleaded in his excuse that he could not beggar his family for Montholon, but he could have refused to give his daughter in marriage to Prince Oscar. However, as it happened, he did well to give his consent, for his daughter obtained an excellent husband.

The wedding was to take place in 1823. Eugène's secretary, Baron Darnay, had already gone to Paris, in order to purchase the princess's trousseau, when Eugène, towards the end of February, 1823, had a slight apoplectic seizure. A month later, while at prayer in his private chapel in Munich, he had another and a more serious attack, and had to be carried to his apartments.

The doctors, unable to agree as to the nature of his malady, bled him repeatedly. It was afterwards stated that his fall from the sleigh during the winter of 1816–17 was the cause of this illness.

So beloved was the Herzog von Leuchtenberg, as he was known to the Bavarians, that the churches of Munich were filled with people praying for his recovery. On April 16th he was supposed to be dying. The streets surrounding the Luitpold Palace were thronged with rich and poor, all anxious to read the latest bulletin.

Hortense, dreading lest she should arrive too late to see her beloved brother alive, hurried to Munich, where she was able to assist her sister-in-law in nursing him. However, the sick man rallied early on the morning of the 17th, and the doctors began to hope that he would recover. The young fiancée went with her brothers and sisters to the cathedral that same day and offered up thanksgiving prayers.

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[1] *Bernadotte*, Charles (1764–1844): a French general, became King of Sweden under the title of Charles John IV in 1818. He was one of Napoleon's many ungrateful friends.

For Eugène, who had so often looked Death in the face, the thought of leaving this world had no terrors. He had kept conscious throughout his illness, and he now expressed a wish to make his will. He appointed his beloved Augusta and his favourite brother-in-law Charles his children's guardians.

May saw a decided improvement in his condition. On the 22nd, notwithstanding his weakness and his corpse-like pallor, he made his first appearance since his illness at his eldest daughter's marriage. On the morrow he, with tears in his eyes, bade farewell to the young couple who were starting for Stockholm. He never saw his daughter again.

As soon as he was strong enough to be moved, he was taken to his summer residence at Ismaning, where he amused himself by dictating his memoirs to Baron Darnay. As he did not get back his strength, he went, accompanied by his step-father's former secretary, M. Planat de La Faye, to drink the waters at Marienbad. He derived so much benefit from his cure that he was able to go to Eugensberg, close to the Lake of Constance.

But he never recovered his spirits, and complained from time to time of feeling ill. He was strong enough, however, to pay a visit to the Grand-duchess of Baden, who was then at Mannheim. On returning to Munich at the end of August, he felt so much stronger that he asked his physicians to allow him to indulge in his favourite pastime—boar-hunting. They consented, but after one or two attempts to resume his old habits, he was obliged to stop on account of frequent attacks of vertigo, to cure which the doctors again had recourse to bleeding. The month of September saw a slight improvement, but before very long his condition had become worse than ever. Sight, speech and hearing failed him ; his left side became useless. He was bled again and yet again. Baron Larrey might have saved his life ; but that excellent man was tending Caulaincourt, who was too ill to be left, and so he could only send written instructions as to the treatment to be followed.

Eugène lingered until the following spring, when he began to sink rapidly. He knew that his course in life was run. To the last he tried to smile at Augusta whenever she entered his sick-room. The brave warrior, however, refused to allow her to remain with him while the Last Sacraments were being administered to him, lest she should see how weak he had become.

About three o'clock on the morning of February 21st, 1824, Augusta, who was watching by his bedside, noticed a change, and bent over his pillow, asking :

" Are you in pain, beloved ? "

" No ! " he whispered faintly, still smiling up with almost sightless eyes at " the best of women."

She raised him in her arms and held him against her heart, until he passed away half an hour later.

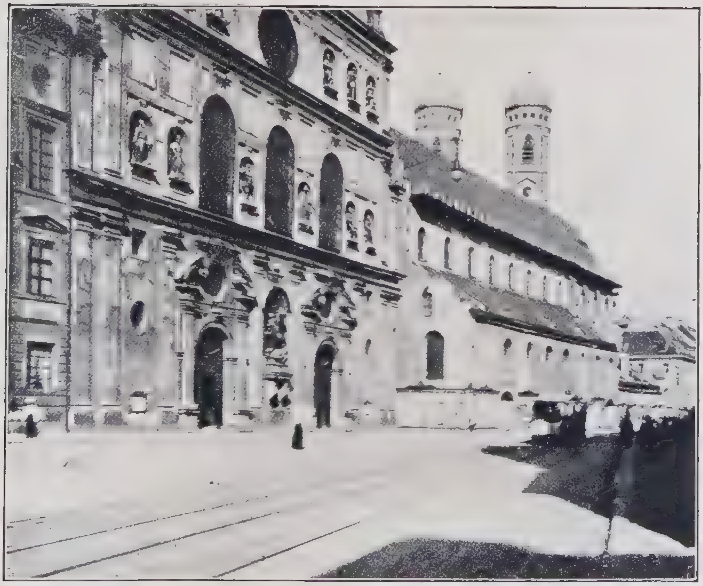
There is a heavy penalty attached to all our earthly joys, and that penalty has to be paid sooner or later. When Augusta at last realized that he would never again greet her with his bright smile, she flung herself on his body and prayed God to take her also. The nation which had given him a home and had learnt to value him, showed its love and esteem by giving him a State funeral. The body, clad in the uniform of the Bavarian guards, and decorated with such tokens of bravery as the Grand Croix of the Légion d'honneur, the Orders of the Iron Crown of Italy, the Golden Fleece and Saint Stephen, lay in state for three days, and was viewed by thousands. Four soldiers watched day and night round his bier. It was a national funeral in the true sense of the term, for the whole nation, peasantry, *bourgeoisie*, army, clergy, magistracy and nobility, mourned the death of this good man. It is said that his father-in-law expressed a wish that his people would display equal sorrow when his time came to die.

The funeral took place February 25th at three o'clock in the afternoon. The procession, headed by Prince Charles and Duke Max of Bavaria, with Eugène's eldest son as chief mourner, and followed by numerous deputations, a military band, four squadrons of horse-guards, all the Court officials, and the dead man's equerry leading his charger, proceeded to the church of Saint Michael, Munich, where the Archbishop having read the last prayers, Eugène's body was laid to rest close to the little daughter, Caroline-Clotilde-Eugénie, who died, aged five months, in 1816.

Hortense was not with her brother at the last, but she arrived from Rome in time to attend his funeral.

(Photo: A. R. Montagu)

THE TOMB OF EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS
Church of Saint Michael, Munich



(Photo: A. R. Montagu)

THE CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL, MUNICH

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A beautiful white marble monument executed by Canova's worthy rival, Thorwaldsen,[1] in which Eugène is represented as a Roman warrior holding in his right hand a wreath of oak leaves, and surrounded by allegorical figures, representing History, Life and Death, bears the following inscription :

HIC PLACIDE OSSA CUBANT
EUGENU NAPOLEŐNIS,
REGIS ITALIAE QUONDAM VICES GERENTIS.
NAT. LUT. PARISIOR. D. III. SEPT. MDCCLXXXI.
DEF. MONARCHU. D. XXI. FEBR. MDCCCXXIV.
MONUMENTUM POSUIT VIDUA MŒRENS
AUGUSTA AMELIA
MAXIMIL. JOS. BAV. REGIS FILIA.

The monument is surmounted by a cross with the following inscription, Eugène's motto, *Honneur et fidélité.*

Many were the letters of condolence received by the heartbroken widow. The Emperor of Russia wrote two letters in which he spoke of the deceased man's noble example and beautiful soul.

Louis XVIII, who, at one time, would gladly have kept Eugène at his Court, said, on learning of his death :

" I am very sorry to hear it. Prince Eugène was an honest fellow and a good man into the bargain ! "

Local poets sang the praises of the dead man, and several German historians witnessed to the fact that his motto, *Honour and fidelity,* had not been an empty phrase with him.

Augusta lived many years after her husband, and truly did she mourn him. Her grief was so fresh that, even after long years of separation, she would shed tears at the memory of his last smile.

One by one she saw his children marry and leave her. In 1826 her second daughter, Hortense-Eugénie, married Prince Frederic of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, a relative of the princess who was said to have befriended her paternal grandmother during the Revolution ; and two or three years later

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[1] *Thorwaldsen,* Albert (1779–1844): the great Danish sculptor, who owed his first success to an Englishman, Henry Philip Hope, who " discovered " the young sculptor in Rome, where he was studying under difficult circumstances owing to want of means.

Augusta's third daughter, Amélie-Auguste-Eugénie-Napoléone, married the Emperor of Brazil, who died, however, five years after their marriage, whereupon his widow took the title of Duchess of Braganza. Eugène's eldest son, who had been born too late to save his father's fortunes, married the Queen of Portugal, Doña Maria de Gloria, in 1835, but he died two months after his marriage.

There was some talk of Louis-Napoleon, later Napoleon III, marrying Auguste's widow. Mention was also made of one of Eugène's daughters, but the delicate health of the latter is said to have prevented the marriage.

In 1839 Augusta's only surviving son, Maximilian, married the daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, the Grand-duchess Marie, when the Czar gave his son-in-law the title of Imperial Highness.

In 1841 the youngest fledgling left the nest, for the pink-and-white baby, Théodolinde, married Count William of Würtemberg.

Augusta divided her life between Munich and Ismaning, where she spent the summer months.

Her last days were saddened by unfounded reports concerning her late husband's military talents. General Anthouard and Colonel Koch both wrote misleading accounts of the campaign of 1814, which were followed by Marmont's *Memoirs*, in which Eugène was accused of being anything but the " Bayard of the nineteenth century," as the Emperor of Russia had called him. Augusta nearly made herself ill in her efforts to clear her husband's memory of the infamous accusations laid to his charge. We quote from Marmont's *Memoirs :*

" General Anthouard has since told me that he happened to be at Munich some time after the Restoration, and he was working with Prince Eugène in his study putting different papers in order, when he came across the despatch which the Emperor had given him to take to Eugène ordering him to execute the movement of which I have just spoken (to evacuate Italy). General Anthouard showed the paper to Eugène and said :

" ' Do you think, *Monseigneur*, that it would be better to keep this document ? '

" ' No ! ' replied Eugène, throwing it into the fire."

This incident is supposed to have taken place in 1821, yet, strange to say, the despatch in question is still to be seen among the ducal archives, where it was found by Augusta when she, aided by her brother, now King of Bavaria, set herself the task of clearing her husband's character.

Death came in 1851 to take " the best of women " to him whom she had loved so tenderly.

In 1857 Augusta's surviving daughters brought a lawsuit against the publishers of Marmont's *Memoirs*, in which they were successful, the publishers being condemned to insert in the volume containing the incriminations (Volume VI) certain documents proving that Eugène was blameless concerning the matter in question. The judge, in summing up the case, said that Eugène had never swerved from the path of duty, and that the duc de Raguse had been guilty of altering the truth. The publishers appealed against the verdict in the following year, but without success.

Of all those who were related to Napoleon in any way, either by the ties of blood or by the ties of affection, Eugène perhaps had the happiest end. Although it was his fate to die a stranger in a strange land, a peculiarly painful fate to a Frenchman, he, during his last years, was surrounded by relations and friends, tended by the best of women, one of those noble creatures whose love is increased, not diminished, by misfortunes, and honoured by his little flock of children, who, although poorly provided with this world's goods, were later sought in marriage by several royal families.

But of all Eugène de Beauharnais' claims to fame, that of having been the adopted son of the Emperor Napoleon was the most precious to him. The highest praise we can give him is expressed in that Emperor's own words : " Eugène has never caused me a moment's sorrow ! "

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